RFU REGULATION 13 – ADULT COMPETITIONS

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RFU REGULATION 13 – ADULT COMPETITIONS

All matches played under the jurisdiction of the RFU and/or in RFU Competitions or any other competition or merit table must be played in accordance with the IRB Laws, IRB Regulations, the RFU Rules, the RFU Regulations and any competition specific Regulations applicable to a competition including, without limitation, the Premiership Regulations, Championship Regulations, Anglo-Welsh Cup Regulations and British & Irish Cup Regulations (as applicable).

In matches where rolling substitutions and/or the man-off rule are permitted, the Regulations set out in Appendix 2 of RFU Regulation 13 will apply.

13.1 General

Delegation by RFU

13.1.1 The Council delegates the following powers to the Committee

(a) to manage and recommend policies and regulations for those competitions as specified to be delegated by Council which shall include, without limitation, the RFU Competitions (other than competitions involving the Premiership and Championship Clubs) and RFU Women Competitions;

(b) to recommend a draft Structured Competitions Season for the following Season for approval by the Governance Standing Committee and Board of Directors;

(c) to make recommendations upon the principles for the allocation of finance made available for RFU Competitions;

(d) to consider for approval the principles of the competitions submitted for approval by Constituent Bodies and Clubs and to produce an annual budget therefor;

(e) to assume such other responsibilities as the Governance Standing Committee may from time to time determine;

(f) to submit regular reports upon its deliberations and proposals to the Governance Standing Committee;

(g) to set regulations for inclusion in non-RFU competitions and to amend non-RFU competition regulations if contrary to RFU Regulations or the IRB Laws of the Game (and any such variations or Law trials as may be adopted by the RFU).

13.1.2 Power of the Committee to delegate

(a) The Committee may delegate such powers as it deems appropriate with the exception of the powers contained in the following RFU Regulations which are reserved to the Committee:

(i) 13.1.2(d);

(ii) 13.1.3;

(iii) 13.1.4;

(iv) 13.3.7; and

(v) 13.8.1

(b) The Committee may delegate to the below Committees such powers as it deems appropriate:

(i) The NCA Committee as the Organising Committee in relation to National Leagues 1 and 2 North and 2 South (Levels 3 and 4 respectively);

(ii) The appropriate Divisional Organising Committee as the Organising Committee in relation to Levels 5 and below.

(c) Those bodies referred to in 13.1.2(b) above to whom the Committee has delegated powers may further delegate those powers, subject to the approval of the Committee, to any Division, Constituent Body or other person, firm or company, media agency or competition administrator. They may also produce Administrative Instructions for the management of RFU Competitions for which they are responsible provided that any such Administrative Instructions and any variation to RFU Regulation 13 have been specifically and previously approved by the Committee.

(d) In any event the Board of Directors and/or the Committee shall have the right of its own volition to review any decision of any Organising Committee, Division, Constituent Body or other person, firm or company, media agency or competition administrator made in relation to these Regulations (whether disciplinary, organisational, administrative or executive), and vary the same (provided always that any Club or person affected by any decision made under this Regulation shall have a right of appeal to an Appeal Panel).

Power to amend or vary or make further provisions during the season

13.1.3 In the event that the Committee considers it is in the interests of rugby union football or an RFU Competition, it may amend or vary RFU Regulation 13 (inclusive) and the Appendices and/or make further regulations during a Season:

(a) where in the view of the Committee exceptional and material circumstances have occurred during any RFU Competition which either have not been provided for in or cannot be equitably dealt with under RFU Regulation 13 (particularly if promotion or relegation is likely to be materially affected), the Committee may at its own instigation introduce regulations for the current Season and/or determine the results of matches that have not been played for reasons related to the above exceptional and material circumstances and/or determine which Clubs should or should not be relegated;

(b) any regulation or decision made or taken by the Committee under this Regulation shall become final and binding unless any person or Club affected has given notice of an appeal to the RFU Head of Discipline within 48 hours of that person or Club affected being made aware of it and an Appeal Panel rules that the regulation or decision of the Committee shall not apply.

Power to seek and apply local amendments or variations prior to the Season

13.1.4 In the event that a Club, Divisional Organising Committee or Constituent Body wishes to seek the amendment or variation of RFU Regulation 13 or the Appendices the following procedure must be applied:

(a) the Club, Divisional Organising Committee or Constituent Body must:

(i) prior to the commencement of the Season, provide written notice (explaining the proposed amendment or variation) to all those Clubs affected; and

(ii) give reasonable (and in any event not less than 7 days) notice to other Clubs that might be affected so that adequate opportunity is given for Clubs that might be affected to express their views, meaningful and adequate consultation takes place with all Clubs that might be affected and no Club in a Constituent Body not a party to such an application is in any way affected or adversely prejudiced by any amendment to or variation of RFU Regulation 13 or the introduction of any further regulation pursuant to the said application;

(iii) consult with any other interested party (which it in its sole discretion deems appropriate) together with the appropriate Organising Committee and if applicable sponsor; and

(iv) submit a written application, together with full detail and supporting evidence, supported by its Constituent Body;

(b) The Committee will only approve the amendment variation or new regulations if it is satisfied:

(i) that written notice under paragraph (a) above has been given to all those Clubs affected prior to the commencement of the Season.

(ii) prior to its introduction that any amendment, variation or new regulation is in the interest of the game of rugby union football and does not adversely affect or prejudice an RFU Competition, any sponsor, or other clubs in an RFU Competition.

Interpretation

13.1.5 The Committee shall have discretion to decide on matters not provided for in (and in the interpretation of) RFU Regulation 13 and its Appendices in the context of all RFU Competitions other than the Premiership & the Championship and at its discretion to decide on all matters not provided

for or upon which interpretation is required in any rules or regulations of any other competition or merit table save where it is such a competition or merit table managed or controlled by a Constituent Body. For the avoidance of doubt, this discretion shall include the interpretation of RFU Regulation 13 in accordance with the underlying principles and intent (insofar as it can be ascertained) of the relevant regulation and the interests of the game of rugby union football.

13.1.6 The Committee's decision(s) in respect of those matters referred to in RFU Regulation 13.1.5 above is final and binding save for any Club's right to appeal or review or such other rights of appeal or review as may be reserved.

13.1.7 In the event that two Clubs playing in any Cup Competition are from different Levels in the League and there are different regulations applicable thereto which would apply to the Match in question the regulations applicable to the lower placed Club will apply save in so far as they are not in conflict with RFU Regulation 13.

13.2 RFU Competitions

13.2.1 All RFU Competitions and RFU Women Competitions shall be governed as follows:

(a) All RFU Competitions are governed by this RFU Regulation 13 save that in respect of the Premiership, the Championship, the Anglo-Welsh Cup and the British & Irish Cup (or as the same may be known from time to time), the provisions of this RFU Regulation 13 are varied to the extent set out in any supplemental Regulations issued by the RFU Council relating to those specific competitions. Other than as varied by any such competition specific Regulations, the remaining provisions of this RFU Regulation 13 shall remain in full force and effect. In the event of any inconsistency between any competition specific Regulations and this RFU Regulation 13, the provisions of such competition specific Regulations shall prevail.

(b) RFU Regulation 16 sets out the Regulations relating to the RFU Women Competitions in England. RFU Regulation 16 is supplemental to the other RFU Regulations (including RFU Regulation 13) which, for the avoidance of doubt, shall have full force and effect save that in the event of conflict between Regulation 16 and the other RFU Regulations, the RFU Regulations (to the extent that they affect the Clubs) are deemed varied by RFU Regulation 16.

13.2.2 RFU Consent to Different Name of Competition

(a) The RFU may from time to time decide to change the name of an RFU Competition, which may include the names of sponsors as the RFU shall determine.

(b) Alternatively, with the prior written consent of the RFU, an RFU Competition (or certain Levels or leagues or leagues in certain geographic areas) may carry separate names or titles which may include the names of sponsors.

League

13.2.3 The League Competition overall shall be called 'The English Clubs Rugby Union Championship'. All League Matches shall be played in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.

13.2.4 Structure of League Competitions

(a) Subject to Regulation 13.2.4(b)(vii) & (viii) below in the 2014-2015 Season there shall be:

(i) at Level 1 a league named the Premiership comprising 12 clubs;

(ii) at Level 2 a league named The Championship comprising 12 clubs;

(iii) at Level 3 a league named National League 1 comprising 16 clubs;

(iv) at Level 4 two leagues named National Leagues 2 North and South each comprising 16 clubs;

(v) at Level 5 four leagues named National Leagues 3 South West, London & South East, Midlands and North each comprising 14 Clubs;

(vi) at Level 6 eight leagues each comprising 14 clubs;

(vii) at Level 7 in the London & South East Division and Midlands Division eight leagues each comprising 12 clubs;

(viii) at Level 7 in the North Division four leagues each comprising 14 clubs;

(ix) at Level 7 in the South West Division two leagues each comprising 12 clubs and two leagues each comprising 14 clubs;

(x) at Level 8 and below such number of leagues comprising such numbers of clubs or teams as have been approved by the Committee.

(b) In the Season, the following principles shall be effective:

(i) Not more than two lower leagues may support a higher league;

(ii) Only Club 1st XVs may take part in the League Competition subject to any variation made pursuant to Regulation 13.2.4(b)(iii) below;

(iii) At Level 8 & below 1st XV, 2nd XV, 3rd XV teams etc., may, subject to Regulation 13.2.4(b)(iv) below, be permitted to play together in the leagues with the consent of the Clubs, Constituent Bodies and Divisional Organising Committees involved;

(iv) Teams from the same Club shall not be permitted to play together in the same league;

(v) A Club may only play in a National League 2 North, 2 South or Divisional League according to its RFU Constituent Body allocation unless otherwise specifically agreed by the Committee or it has been required to transfer to another League pursuant to the Level Transfer Regulations;

(vi) Subject to Regulations 13.2.4(b)(vii) & (viii) below, in the event it becomes apparent to the Committee or an Organising Committee is advised on or after 1st June prior to any season that a Club for any reason whatsoever is withdrawing from or is unable to participate in the Competition or in its League then the League in question will for the ensuing season comprise the remaining participating Clubs.

(vii) In the event it becomes apparent to the RFU Board of Directors or the RFU Board of Directors is advised before 1 August prior to the Season that a Premiership Club or a Championship Club for any reason whatsoever is withdrawing from or is unable to participate in or is removed from the Premiership or the Championship (as the case may be), the RFU Board of Directors may, in its absolute discretion and subject to such terms as it may decide, require that:

a) a Club which would otherwise play in the Championship play in the Premiership; and/or

b) a Club which would otherwise play in Level 3 play in the Championship.

(viii) Where such decisions referred to in Regulation 13.2.4(b)(vii) above is made on or after 1st June prior to any season the League at Level 3 will for the ensuing season comprise fewer than 16 Clubs.

13.2.5 Club Positions

(a) Unless otherwise agreed by the Committee, the position of a Club/team shall be established by awarding four League points for a win and two League points for a draw. An additional League point will be awarded to a team:

(i) on each occasion it scores four or more tries in a League Match; and

(ii) on each occasion it loses a League Match by seven points or less.

(b) If two or more Clubs have the same number of League points at the end of the Season, final league positions shall be determined firstly by the number of wins achieved and then on the basis of match points scored.

(i) A Club with a larger number of wins in the League shall be placed higher than a Club with the same number of League points but fewer wins.

(ii) If Clubs have equal League points and an equal number of wins in the League then a Club with a larger difference between match points 'for' and match points 'against' shall be placed

higher in the League than a Club with a smaller difference between match points 'for' and match points 'against'.

(iii) Should two Clubs have the same number of League points and an equal number of wins and the same match points difference, a Club having scored more match points 'for' shall be placed higher in the League than a Club having the lesser number of match points 'for'.

(iv) If this still does not establish the positions then the Clubs involved shall be ranked according to the number of matches won, excluding the first League match of the season. If necessary this process shall be extended to exclude the second match, third match and so on until the final positions are established.

13.2.6 Principles of Promotion

The principles of promotion at the conclusion of Season 2014-2015 shall be:

(a) The winner of the Championship shall be promoted to play in the Premiership (Level 1) in Season 2014-15 provided such Club fulfils the minimum standards criteria for the Premiership and complies with any other applicable regulations in connection with its promotion;

(b) Subject to Regulation 5, the top club in National League 1 (Level 3) shall be promoted to the Championship (Level 2);

(c) At Levels 3 and below, (subject to Regulation 13.2.6), where two Leagues support one League, the top Club in each of the supporting Leagues at the end of the Season shall be promoted to the higher League (or Level). Additionally at Levels 4 and below (subject to Regulation 13.2.6(e)), the two second placed Clubs in each of the supporting Leagues shall play off in accordance with the Play-Off Regulations and the winner shall be promoted to the higher Level;

(d) At Levels 4 and below (subject to Regulation 13.2.6), where one League supports one League, the top two Clubs from the lower League at the end of the Season shall be promoted to the higher League (or Level);

(e) For the purposes of Regulations 13.2.6(c) and (d), the position of the team(s) not eligible for promotion shall be disregarded, including without limitation:

(i) the positions of teams other than 1st XVs in Level 8 since Regulations 13.2.4(b)(ii) and (iii) apply;

(ii) in the event that a team would be promoted into a League in which another team of the same Club plays, as prohibited by Regulation 13.2.4(b)(iv).

13.2.7 Principles of Relegation

Subject to Regulation 13.2.8, the principles of relegation at the conclusion of Season 2014-2015 shall be:

(a) Provided that the winner of Level 3 fulfils the criteria for promotion set out in Regulation 5, the lowest placed Club in the Championship shall be relegated to Level 3. If the winner of Level 3 does not fulfil such criteria and is not promoted for that or any other reason, the lowest placed Club in the Championship shall not be relegated to Level 3;

(b) At Level 3, three Clubs shall be relegated;

(c) At Levels 4 - 7, where two Leagues support one, three Clubs shall be relegated from the higher league and the Level Transfer Regulations shall be applied;

(d) At Levels 4 - 7, where one League supports one League, two clubs shall be relegated and the Level Transfer Regulations shall be applied;

(e) At Level 8 and below Level Transfer Regulations do not apply and all clubs shall compete in leagues on a geographical/Divisional/Constituent Body basis. Relegation at Level 7 will be applied accordingly.

(f) At Levels 8 and below, after promotion has taken place in accordance with Regulations 13.2.6(a) to (e) inclusive above, and relegation from Level 7 has been applied on a geographical/ Divisional/Constituent Body basis the requisite number of Clubs or teams shall be relegated at the end of the Season so that in the following season there are in all Leagues at Level 8 and below the same number of Clubs or teams as in the Season or such other number of Clubs or teams as the Committee may decide;

Note: In leagues at Level 8 and below it is impossible to determine how many Clubs are to be relegated from any particular League until relegation has been applied from Level 7 on a geographical basis and the results of the play off matches are known. Both factors will have an effect on the number of clubs to be relegated from each league at Level 8 and below.

(g) At Level 8 and below if Regulation 13.2.4(b)(iv) applies such that, for example, a first XV is relegated into a League in which the second XV from the same Club plays, that second XV shall automatically be relegated as one of the requisite number of clubs to be relegated.

13.2.8 Reduction in Number of Clubs

At Levels 2 to 7 (inclusive), where at the end of the Season, a League finishes with fewer Clubs than the number set out in Regulation 13.2.4 (due to merger, liquidation or other reason), then the number of Clubs relegated from that League shall be reduced accordingly by the number of Clubs it is missing. This Regulation 13.2.8 shall also apply to a League or Level where such League or Level would have a fewer number of Clubs than the number set out in Regulation 13.2.4 in the following season as a result of the application of this Regulation 13.2.8 to the Level above.

This shall apply as follows:

(a) In the Championship, no Club shall be relegated;

(b) In National League One, one fewer Club shall be relegated for each Club the League is missing;

(c) At Levels 4 - 7, one fewer Club shall be relegated from each League for each Club the League is missing;

(d) At Levels 4 and 5, where less club(s) have been relegated from the higher level in accordance with (b) and/or (c) above, equivalent less Club(s) shall be relegated from that Level. The Club(s) reprieved from relegation which would otherwise have occurred under Regulation 13.2.7 will be determined by the 'Best Playing Record' of all clubs that would normally have been relegated from that Level. Save that a second club cannot be reprieved from the same league until all other leagues at the same level have had a team reprieved from relegation;

(e) At Levels 6 and 7, where fewer club(s) have been relegated from the higher level in accordance with (b) and/or (c) above equivalent fewer Club(s) shall be relegated from that Level in that Division for each Club that that Level in that Division is missing. The Club(s) reprieved from relegation which would otherwise have occurred under Regulation 13.2.7 will be determined by the 'Best Playing Record' of all clubs that would normally have been relegated from that Level in that Division. Save that a second club cannot be reprieved from the same league until all other leagues at the same level have had a team reprieved from relegation;

(f) Where the number of Clubs which would be reprieved from relegation exceeds the number of Clubs which would be relegated under Regulation 13.2.7, the decisions as to relegation and any additional promotion shall be determined by the RFU in consultation with the Committees which would apply to the Leagues involved.

(g) Regulations 13.2.4(b)(vii) and (viii) shall take precedence over Regulations 13.2.6 to 13.2.8 (inclusive).

13.2.9 Power to Vary Promotion and Relegation

Notwithstanding the foregoing 13.2.6-8 (inclusive) and the provisions of Regulation 13.2.4 above the Committee may in exceptional circumstances and subject to RFU Regulation 13.1.4:

(i) disapply, suspend, amend and/or vary the foregoing 13.2.6-13.2.8 and/or Regulation 13.2.4 above as to relegation and/or as to the number of Clubs comprising any League or Leagues; and/or

(ii) save that the top-placed Club in every League and the second placed club in the lower league where one league supports one league must be promoted to the next higher League (or Level), and where two Leagues support one League the two second placed Clubs to shall play off and the winner shall be promoted to the next higher League.

(iii) transfer any Club from the League in which it would have been placed by virtue of the application Regulations 13.2.6 to 8 above and/or the Level Transfer Regulations to such other League (whether higher or lower) as the committee shall think fit.

13.2.10 Play-Offs

(a) Purpose

The purpose of these Regulations shall be to determine which of the two Clubs shall in addition to the first placed club in each of the two Relevant Leagues be promoted to play in a higher League (or Level) in the following Season subject at Level 8 only to the proviso as described in RFU Regulation 13.2.6 above.

(b) Format

The two Clubs shall play one Play-Off Match against each other and the winner shall be promoted.

(c) Determination of winners in the event of a draw

(i) RFU Regulation 13.6.5(a) shall apply to Play-Off Matches.

(d) Venue

A Play-Off Match shall be held at the ground of the Club with the Best Playing Record.

13.2.11 Level Transfer Regulations

(a) These Regulations shall be called the Level Transfer Regulations and will only be applicable to Levels 4 to 7 (inclusive but excluding Clubs relegated from Level 7 to Level 8).

(b) After promotion and relegation into and between Levels 4 – 7 has been effected pursuant to 13.2.6 to 13.2.10 (inclusive), Clubs shall in the first instance be placed in the League consistent with their Divisional and Constituent Body affiliation.

Note: Clubs that opted for a 'permanent level transfer' to another Division or Constituent Body for league purposes under earlier protocols will continue to be considered affiliated to their adopted Constituent Body in this first instance and for the purpose of Regulation 13.2.11(b) only. The RFU Events and Competitions Department holds a definitive list of these clubs who must otherwise conform to the Level Transfer Regulations.

(c) In the event that promotion and relegation pursuant to Regulation 13.2.11(b) above does not produce the Correct Number of Clubs for the following Season in two or more leagues, a Club or Clubs shall (subject to the provisions of 13.2.11 (f) and (g) below) be Level Transferred to restore the Correct Number of Clubs. Club(s) will be selected for Level Transfer in accordance with Regulations 13.2.11(d) and (e) below.

(d) Subject to Regulations 13.2.11 (f) and (g) below, all Clubs in a League included in the process to produce the Correct Number of Clubs shall be liable to be transferred in accordance with the procedure set out in Regulation 13.2.11(e).

Note: This Regulation applies whether a Club has remained in the League following the Season or has been promoted or relegated into it pursuant to Regulation 13.2.11 (b).

(e) The following procedure will be utilised in deciding which Club(s) is (are) Level Transferred:

(i) The Organising Committee(s) will determine the number of moves required to satisfy the overall imbalance which causes the least inconvenience to all Clubs affected. Thereafter it will identify all the Clubs that could reasonably make the required move(s) who will initially be invited to make the Level Transfer(s) voluntarily.

(ii) In the event that too many of the identified Club(s) or insufficient of them decline to make the Level Transfer voluntarily to ensure that each League has the Correct Number of Clubs selection of Clubs for Level Transfer will take place in the following order and repeated (including the Club(s) previously selected) until each League has the Correct Number of Clubs:

(a) Club(s) that competed in the League to be augmented in the Season and which volunteer(s) to remain there for another season;

(b) Club(s) that volunteer(s) to take a Level Transfer;

(c) Subject to the provisions of 13.2.11(f) and (g) below, Club(s) with the Lowest Total Mileage between it (them) and all the Clubs that remain in the League to be augmented.

(d) Where two Clubs have an identical Lowest Total Mileage and (subject to Regulation 13.2.11 (g)) a choice between those Clubs has to be made the following will apply in sequence:

(i) Club(s) that competed in Season 2014-15 in the league to be augmented in Season 2015-16 shall remain there for another season; or

(ii) In the absence of any Club competing in the league to be augmented, if one of the Clubs competed at a lower league Level in Season 2014-15 then that Club shall be asked if it wishes to take a Level Transfer, if not the Club that competed at a higher league level shall be subjected to the Level Transfer; or

(iii) If both Clubs competed at the same level in Season 2014-15 then the Club with the Best Playing Record shall be asked if it wishes to take a Level Transfer and if not, the other Club shall be subject to the Level Transfer.

Note: In the event that the request for Clubs to volunteer produces more than the required number of Clubs to ensure that there is the Correct Number of Clubs in each League Regulation 13.2.11(e)(ii)(c) above will be invoked but including only those Clubs that have volunteered for the Level Transfer.

(f) At the conclusion of the procedure described in 13.2.11(e) above, if a club subject of a Level Transfer in the previous season(s) is returned to a league consistent with its Constituent Body or Divisional affiliation other than on promotion or relegation, that club shall be entitled to remain in that League for two seasons provided it is not promoted or relegated at the end of the first season unless it volunteers for a Level Transfer.

(g) Where in exceptional circumstances the strict application of Regulations 13.2.11 (e)(ii)(c) and 13.2.11 (f) above creates a significant disadvantage to a Club (or Clubs) whether such Club or Clubs is (are) the Club(s) to be transferred pursuant to Regulation 13.2.11 (e)(ii)(c) above or other Club(s) affected by the proposed transfer in terms of travelling time, cost or because of local geography considerable other inconvenience AND the Organising Committee can effect a Level Transfer which removes or reduces that significant disadvantage for the benefit of the game of rugby union football overall in the locality the Organising Committee may in its absolute discretion take such factors (in addition to or instead of Lowest Total Mileage) into account when deciding which Club(s) are to be Level Transferred.

Cups

13.2.12 The Cup Competitions shall be called:

(a) Anglo-Welsh Cup, which shall be played in accordance with the LV = Cup Regulations

(b) British & Irish Cup - 'The British & Irish Cup', which shall be played in accordance with the British & Irish Cup Regulations;

(c) Intermediate Cup - 'The Intermediate Cup', which shall be between those eligible Clubs which are invited and agree to play in it. All matches shall be played in accordance with these RFU Regulations;

(d) Senior Vase - 'The Senior Vase', which shall be between those Clubs which do not take part in the Intermediate Cup and are invited and agree to play in it. All matches shall be played in accordance with these Regulations;

(e) Junior Vase - 'The Junior Vase', which shall be between those Clubs which do not take part in the Intermediate Cup or Senior Vase and are invited and agree to play in it. All matches shall be played in accordance with these Regulations.

13.2.13 Format of Cup Competitions

(a) The format of the Intermediate Cup shall be as follows:

(i) It shall comprise semi finals and a final;

(ii) Each Divisional Organising Committee shall nominate one (1) club at Level 7 to enter the Intermediate Cup;

(iii) The semi finals will be played on an area basis, namely the Northern Division with Midland Division and London and South-East Division with South-West Division.

(b) The format of the Senior Vase shall be as follows:

(i) it shall comprise semi finals and a final;

(ii) Each Divisional Organising Committee shall nominate one (1) club at Level 8 to enter the Senior Vase;

(iii) the semi finals will be played on an area basis, namely the Northern Division with Midland Division and London and South-East Division with South-West Division. Draws will be made accordingly;

(c) The format of the Junior Vase shall be as follows:

(i) it shall comprise semi finals and a final;

(ii) Each Divisional Organising Committee shall nominate one (1) club at Levels 9 and below to enter the Junior Vase;

(iii) the semi finals will be played on an area basis, namely the Northern Division with Midland Division and London and South-East Division with South-West Division. Draws will be made accordingly;

(d) Draws in Cup Competitions shall be made as follows:

(i) draws for each Cup Competition will be arranged by the Committee, which shall if it considers it to be in the interest of the Cup Competition generally or the Clubs participating therein be entitled to give byes to one or more Clubs selected by the Committee in its sole and absolute discretion. The draws shall be made during the seven days following the weekend specified for the completion of the preceding round;

(ii) if, having agreed to participate, any Club does not take part in the Cup Competition(s) or having participated fails to honour a fixture then that Club's opponents in the round as drawn will receive a bye into the next round; in addition and, without prejudice to RFU Regulation 13.10 or any other action that may be taken by the Committee, that Club will not be entitled to any distribution under RFU Regulation 13.8;

(iii) in the event of inequality of the number of Clubs from each Local County, Region, Semi-Division, Division or area, in respect of either or any of the rounds and notwithstanding the provisions of RFU Regulation 13.2.13(a) above, there shall be preliminary draws held before the draws of either or any of the rounds, in order to provide an even number of Clubs to participate in such draws. The Committee will in its sole and absolute discretion make the necessary arrangements and take such decisions as it deems appropriate particularly in relation to travel distances for the holding of any such preliminary draws in the interests of the Competition and the participating Clubs generally;

(iv) Subject to RFU Regulations 13.2.13(d)(v) & (vi) below the first named Club to be drawn in a match up to and including the semi finals shall be the home team, and unless otherwise mutually agreed, the venue of that match shall be the ground of such home team. The final shall be played at a venue determined by the Committee;

(v) If the first-named Club to be drawn in a match plays its home fixtures in the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands, the match shall, unless both clubs agree to play off-shore at the expense of the off-shore club nevertheless, be played on the mainland of England (including for the purposes of this Regulation the Isle of Wight) either on the ground of the second named Club to be drawn or, if the Isle of Man or Channel Island Club shall so wish, on the ground of any other Club on the mainland of England within the area of the Constituent Body to which the Isle of Man or the Channel Island Club is allocated. In this event, all arrangements which are to be agreed with the host Club shall be made by the Isle of Man or Channel Island Club, which shall be responsible for any ground expenses incurred and shall be at no cost to the host Club involved;

(vi) If the Committee so decides in its absolute discretion that the ground of the home team is not suitable for the staging of the semi-final for safety or any other substantial reason it shall have the power to require the said semi-final be played on another ground as close as possible to the ground of the home team, in which case it shall specify the financial arrangements, and the team drawn first shall be deemed to be the home team.

13.2.14 Dates of Rounds

The dates of the Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase and Junior Vase shall be as set out in the Structured Season.

13.3 Eligibility – Clubs and Constituent Bodies

League

13.3.1 Subject to RFU Regulation 13.3.7 the League Competitions shall be open to:

(a) any Club in membership with the RFU; or

(b) a club, which is not a member of the RFU, subject to the requirement that it must be able to demonstrate for the Season that it will be (and in the season previous it was) capable of satisfying the criteria for membership of the RFU. In addition the Club must agree to be bound by RFU Regulation 19 and procure that its players recognise and agree to be bound by RFU Regulation 19. A Club not a member of the RFU must in the opinion of the Committee have demonstrated in the previous season that it is capable of fulfilling a League programme but was not able to satisfy criteria for membership of the RFU for the previous two years; or

(c) a Club permitted to play in a league by the RFU on a temporary basis.

(d) a University Club (or any other educational establishment) provided that the Club is able to demonstrate to the Committee that it has:

(i) completed a regular fixture list on Saturdays for over 2 Seasons; and

(ii) it has a sufficient number of players in residence locally to the Club; and

(iii) it has a separate constitution to the University's (or other such establishment's) Athletic Union.

13.3.2 In the Season any Club applying to join the League Competition(s) must be placed in the bottom League in its Division subject to the following two exceptions:

(a) Where an application made for a variation of this Regulation is made under RFU Regulation 13.1 with the support of not only the Constituent Bodies concerned but also the Clubs in the League concerned (and the consent of the Clubs in the Leagues below) that a Club joins at a higher Level is approved by the Committee;

(b) Where there has been a bona fide corporate restructure of a Club in compliance with RFU Regulations in connection therewith and the consent of the Committee (which it may in its absolute discretion withhold) has been granted in which case that restructured Club may be entitled to retain the League position of the Club prior to its restructure subject to RFU approval.

13.3.3 No application for entry to the League will be accepted if it is made later than 1 April preceding the Season. The approval to such entry of the Committee and of the appropriate Divisional Organising Committee must be obtained.

Cups

13.3.5 Subject to RFU Regulations 13.3.7 and 13.3.8 such Competitions shall be open as follows:

(a) Anglo-Welsh Cup - in accordance with LV= Cup Regulations

(b) British & Irish Cup – in accordance with the British & Irish Cup Regulations

(d) Intermediate Cup - the Clubs at Level 7 provided that they have complied with such criteria and/or restrictions as the Club's Constituent Body or the Committee wishes to impose and which having been invited to participate have accepted the invitation by the due date specified;

(e) Senior Vase – the Clubs at Level 8 provided that they have complied with such criteria and/or restrictions as the Club's Constituent Body or the Committee wishes to impose and which having been invited to participate have accepted the invitation by the due date specified thereon.

(f) Junior Vase - all Clubs at Levels 9 and below which have complied with such criteria and/or restrictions as the Club's Constituent Body or the Committee wishes to impose and which having been invited to participate have accepted the invitation by the due date specified thereon.

County Championship Competitions

13.3.6 The Counties shall compete in the County Championship Competitions as set out in RFU Regulation 13.11.

Conditions on Membership or Participation

13.3.7 The Committee shall have the power at any time prior to or during the Season to impose conditions upon the membership or continued participation of any Club or Constituent Body in any RFU Competition. Any Club or Constituent Body failing to comply with such conditions shall not be entitled to enter the RFU Competition or to continue to participate in it.

13.3.8 In respect of Cup Competitions, the Committee:

(a) in its discretion may disregard a sanction of either deduction of League points or relegation for the sole purpose of assessment by the Committee as to whether or not that Club should be entitled to enter any RFU Cup Competition;

(b) may determine that any Club which failed to honour a fixture in any RFU Cup Competition in the previous Season (or which withdrew from such competition subsequent to 1 August 2014 having previously agreed to take part) or any other Club which in its opinion should not be permitted to take part in the Competition shall not be eligible to participate in any RFU Cup Competition.

13.4 Eligibility & Restriction on Players

13.4.1 Registration

(a) A Club may only play or select as a replacement or substitute players who hold Effective Registration for that Club in accordance with the Adult Player Registration Regulations set out in Regulation

14. The only conclusive evidence of Effective Registration is the Computerised Record held by the RFU as at the kick-off time of the match in which such players are selected to play or be a replacement as listed on the match card. Each Club is responsible for ensuring its strict compliance with this Regulation and must take all reasonable steps to ensure compliance.

(b) The only exception to Regulation 13.4.1(a) above applies to League Matches at Level 9 and below only, and is that two unregistered players may be selected as players or replacements without penalty provided they are eligible for registration and do not play on a second or subsequent occasion until correct papers are lodged with the Registrar or in the case of online Registration the procedural obligations have been fulfilled; and such players are not Effectively Registered with another Club and are identified on the match card as not having Effective Registration and with their Date of Birth.

(c) If a Club wishes to play or select a player who does not hold Effective Registration for that Club, it must take all reasonable steps to comply with Regulation 13.4.1(b). In the event of breach, the Committee may take into account the following:

(i) whether diligent enquiry has been made by the Club to ascertain that the player is not registered with another Club;

(ii) whether the Club made enquiries with its League Secretary or simply requested a player to confirm his status;

(iii) in the event of a mistake, whether that mistake is acceptable in the opinion of the Committee.

13.4.2 Suspended Players

No Club or Constituent Body shall knowingly play in any match players who have been suspended or expelled by the RFU.

13.4.3 Foreign Players

At Levels 4 and above, a Club may not play or select as a replacement or substitute more than two Foreign Players in any match.

13.4.4 Loan & England Academy Players

A Club may not play or select as a replacement or substitute in a Match more than four players from another club of which no more than three shall be Loan Players and the others (up to the maximum of four) must be England Academy Players under the age of 24 as at 1 September 2014.

13.4.5 Players in Representative Matches

England or Other National Unions

A Club is not permitted to postpone a match notwithstanding any of its players being required to play a Representative Match on the date specified for a League Match.

13.4.6 Cup-tied Players

(a) A Club may not be represented in any match in the Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase and Junior Vase by any person who has played or been selected as a replacement for another Club in the same Cup Competition in the current Season.

(b) A Club may not be represented in any match in the Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase and Junior Vase by any person who has played or been selected as a replacement for another Club in a Cup Competition ranking above it in the current Season unless such a person is an England Academy Player.

Note: Cup Competition ranking: - Intermediate Cup (Highest Ranking), Senior Vase and Junior Vase (Lowest Ranking)

(c) A Constituent Body may not be represented in the County Competitions or an U20 Competition by any person who has played or been selected as a replacement for another Constituent Body in the County Competitions or an U20 Competition in the current season.

Note: In order to check if a player is cup-tied, please contact the RFU not less than 72 hours before the match.

13.5 Replacements and Substitutes

13.5.1 The specific Regulations relating to replacements and substitutions are set out in Appendix 2 of RFU Regulation 13.

13.5.2 In matches where rolling substitutions and/or the man-off rule are permitted, the regulations set out in Appendix 2 of RFU Regulation 13 will apply.

13.6 Match & Fixture Management

13.6.1 Fixture Lists

Fixture lists in respect of League Competitions shall be prepared by the Committee. A copy shall be sent to the RFU by 15th June in each year. Such fixtures shall be deemed to have been approved by the RFU (which has the right to object to such fixtures) unless notice to the contrary is given within seven days of the receipt by the RFU or such longer period of time where circumstances certified by the RFU as being exceptional occur which renders it impossible to give such notice within the specified time and/or necessitates a change subsequent to approval or deemed approval.

13.6.2 Teams

Every Club must in all matches in any League Competition play its strongest possible first XV (save where a match involves its second or lower XV at Level 8 or below unless agreed otherwise by the Committee).

13.6.3 Kit

Clash of Colours

(a) In the event of Clubs having clashing or similar colours:

(i) at Levels 3 to 5, the away team shall be responsible for changing its colours subject to the satisfaction of the appointed Referee.

(ii) at Levels 6 and below, the home team shall be responsible for changing its colours subject to the satisfaction of the appointed Referee.

(iii) in the Cup Competitions, the County Championship Competitions and the U20 Competition, the home team shall be responsible for changing its colours subject to the satisfaction of the appointed Referee.

unless the Organising Committee of the League or Cup Competition concerned has in its regulations or administrative instructions specified the alternative team must change its colours.

(b) In respect of a Cup Competition match played at a neutral venue, the home team will be decided by the toss of a coin at least two days before the match by the Committee in the presence of two independent witnesses.

Numbering

(c) The jerseys of Clubs should all be numbered in accordance with any IRB requirements in order to ensure the correct identification of all players and replacements during a match.

13.6.4 Matches

(a) Dates

All matches in any RFU Competition other than the Premiership and the Championship must be played on Saturday unless some other date is specified by the Committee or agreed by the Clubs and also the Committee.

(b) Times

(i) In the absence of an alternative requirement from the Committee appropriate to the RFU Competition concerned, a match will start at the home Club's usual kick-off time which shall be between:

(A) 1400 and 1500 on weekends and public holidays; and

(B) 1900 and 2000 on weekdays.

(ii) The two Clubs concerned may agree an earlier or later kick-off time, however, any such agreement must be notified to the Committee no later than three days prior to the date of the match.

(iii) In any event, the Committee retains the power to specify any kick-off time. It may, if it wishes, permit written representations from the two Clubs concerned in this regard.

(c) Delays

Any delay from the specified or agreed kick-off time may be reported by the non-offending Club or the Referee to the Committee of the Competition concerned and may lead to sanctions being imposed.

(d) Toss

The toss for and the decision as to who will kick-off or will choose ends and which end each team will have in the first half of the match must have been taken no later than 15 minutes before kick-off.

(e) Home & Away

All League Matches shall be played on a home and away basis unless agreed otherwise by the Committee.

Administrative Note: Where a Club is forbidden from playing on its home ground for disciplinary reasons the match must still take place on the scheduled date and such other pitch as the Club may use for the purposes of this Regulation be deemed to be the Club's home ground.

(f) Half time interval

All Matches shall be of 80 minutes duration, divided into two halves of 40 minutes each. In all matches, the interval between each of the two halves shall not be more than 15 minutes (unless both teams agree otherwise to a shorter period) during which time the teams may leave the playing enclosure. For matches at Level 5 and below, the Referee has the right to insist that the half time interval is shorter and that the teams shall not leave the pitch.

13.6.5 Drawn Matches (Cup Competitions, County Championship, National Under 20 Championship and Play-Off Matches only)

(a) All knock out matches including Play-Off Matches (except Semi-Finals (where played at neutral venues) and Finals)

(i) In all knock out matches if after 40 minutes of play each way the scores are level, there shall be a five-minute break. After this break, the teams will change ends and there shall be a period of extra time between the teams of 10 minutes each way, with a one-minute interval.

(ii) If the scores are then still equal, the team that has scored most tries shall be declared the winners.

(iii) If this does not produce a result, the team that has scored the most goals from tries shall be declared the winners.

(iv) If the scores remain equal, in all matches save for the Semi-Finals (where played at neutral venues) and Final, the away team shall be declared the winners.

(b) Semi-Finals (where played at neutral venues) and Finals

(i) In the Semi Finals (where played at neutral venues) and any Final where the Organising Committee agrees, there shall be after a five minute break extra time between the same teams of 10 minutes each way with a one minute half time. If the scores are still level, the team that has scored the most tries shall be the winner. If this does not produce a result, the team that has scored the most goals from tries shall be the winner.

(ii) In the Finals, if after 40 minutes play each way the scores are level, the team that has scored the most tries shall be the winner. If this does not produce a result, the team that has scored most goals from tries shall be the winner.

(iii) If no result is achieved under Regulations 13.6.5(b)(i) or (ii), the result shall be decided as follows:

(a) Each team shall nominate one player from its number on the field of play at the final whistle to participate on its behalf in a place kicking competition;

(b) Starting with the kicker from the team that kicked-off the match, each kicker in turn shall attempt a place kick from the pre-determined positions indicated in Regulation 13.6.5(b)(iii)(d) below until such time as, after an equal number of attempts, one kicker has kicked more goals than the other;

(c) These attempts will be made towards the goal posts nearest the players' entrance tunnel to the pitch or in the event of both sets of goal posts being of equal distance from the players entrance tunnel the goal posts to the left of the said tunnel when emerging from it;

(d) The attempts will be taken from the following positions in turn, repeating the sequence until a winner is decided:

- the centre of the 22-metre line
- the intersection of 22-metre and 15-metre lines to left of posts facing
- the intersection of 22-metre and 5-metre lines to left of posts facing
- the intersection of 22-metre and 15-metre lines to right of posts facing
- the intersection of 22-metre and 5-metre lines to right of posts facing.

13.6.6 Postponed Matches

League Matches at Levels 3-4 (inclusive)

(a) Where a home Club wishes (or considers that it may be appropriate) to cancel or postpone a match at Level 4 or above because of Pitch or Weather Conditions:

(i) The home Club must contact the RFU Referee Department as early as possible and in any event before 1700 on the day preceding the match to request a pitch inspection.

(ii) The home Club must also inform the away Club and the Committee that the match is in doubt due to the pitch being unplayable as a result of poor Weather Conditions (or the forecast of poor Weather Conditions) as soon as reasonably practicable.

(iii) A suitably accredited RFU Referee (not a person, whether a Referee or not, who regularly acts as a Club's Fourth Official or who is a member of the home Club) must confirm the postponement after an inspection of the match pitch. Such a pitch inspection by an independent Referee must take place before the time the away Club intend to travel to fulfil the fixture.

(iv) If the inspecting Referee decides the pitch unplayable and/or likely to be unplayable before 1700 on the day preceding the match, the home Club must immediately inform the RFU, the Organising Committee (or its delegate) and the Match Officials as well as the away Club. If the Referee decides the pitch is unplayable after 1700 on the day preceding the match, the home Club must immediately notify the away Club, the Committee and the Match Officials. Alternatively, if the inspecting Referee deems the pitch playable and/or likely to be playable the home Club must act on that judgement and notify the away Club accordingly.

(v) When a late decision (i.e. within 3 hours of kick-off) as to the fitness of the pitch for playing a match is necessary, the decision shall be made by the captains of the teams involved. If the captains agree for the match to proceed, the Referee is still entitled to decline to referee any match on the grounds of safety or other substantial reason. If one or both of the captains do not agree for the match to proceed, the match will not be played and the matter will be referred to the Organising Committee to decide upon what action shall be taken in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.11. Any match that is not played on the grounds that the pitch was unfit or for any other substantial reason shall be notified by the home Club to the Organising Committee within 48 hours of the decision to not play the match together with the view of the Referee of the fitness of the pitch and the provisions of RFU Regulation 13.6.11 shall apply.

Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase, Junior Vase and League Matches at Levels 5 and below

(b) Where a home Club in Levels 5 and below, is concerned that it might have to cancel or postpone a match because of Pitch or Weather Conditions:

(i) the home Club must as soon as it is aware of the position advise their opposition and the League Secretary (or relevant Organising Committee in the case of Cup Competitions) of its concerns and keep them advised of the position. All steps possible should be taken to prevent unnecessary travel;

(ii) if a Club wishes to cancel the match for Pitch or Weather Conditions, it must try to obtain an opinion of a member of the Club's Local Referees' Society as to whether the match is likely to be played or cancelled. A Match should not be cancelled because of Pitch or Weather Conditions without an inspection of the pitch by a Referee or the agreement of the League Secretary (or relevant Organising Committee in the case of Cup Competitions).

(iii) A Club whose home ground is unfit to play must seek an alternative venue. In the event of Clubs failing to agree on the suitability of the alternative venue, a ruling can be made by the Organising Committee. During the first part of the season, Clubs playing in home and away Leagues will be expected in the first instance to exchange the venue to the one originally scheduled for the second half of the Season.

(iv) When a late decision (i.e. within 3 hours of kick-off) as to the fitness of the pitch for playing a match is necessary, the decision shall be made by the captains of the teams involved. If the captains agree for the match to proceed, the Referee is still entitled to decline to referee any match on safety grounds or other substantial reason. If one or both of the captains do not agree for the match to proceed, the match will not be played and the matter will be referred to the Organising Committee to decide upon what action shall be taken in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.11. Any match that is not played on the grounds that the pitch was unfit and for any other substantial reason, shall be notified by the home Club to the League Secretary (or relevant Organising Committee in the case of Cup Competitions) within 48 hours of the decision to not play the match together with the view of the Referee of the fitness of the pitch and the provisions of RFU Regulation 13.6.11 shall apply.

13.6.7 Abandoned Matches

(a) Weather Conditions (which shall be deemed to include bad light in the sole opinion of the Referee)

Less than 60 Minutes Played

(i) If Weather Conditions solely prevent a match being played or result in a Match being abandoned with less than sixty minutes having been played, then the match will be replayed in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.10 unless the Committee exceptionally and in its absolute discretion agrees / specifies otherwise.

60 or more Minutes Played

(ii) If a match is abandoned solely because of Weather Conditions when sixty or more minutes have been played, then the score at the moment of abandonment shall stand and be deemed the final score in the match. The Referee's decision as to the necessity for abandonment and the number of minutes played at the moment of abandonment shall be final.

(b) Other Reasons

If the Referee finds it necessary to abandon a match for any reason other than Weather Conditions, then, irrespective of the number of minutes played, the following shall apply:

(i) If it is possible for the match to be reconvened on another pitch at the hosting venue and that pitch is compliant with the applicable IRB Regulations, the match must be reconvened on such pitch unless the referee deems (in his or her absolute discretion) that such pitch is unsuitable or that it is inappropriate to reconvene the match; or

(ii) If it is not possible to reconvene the match on another pitch in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.7(b)(i), the result of that match shall be reviewed and determined by the Organising Committee (or its delegate). The Organising Committee (or its delegate) may order the match to be replayed in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.10 and/or impose such other sanction as it deems appropriate.

13.6.8 Notification

(a) When a match is abandoned, the home Club must notify the Organising Committee (or its delegate) of the reason for non-playing or non-completion of the match as soon as possible but in any event within 24 hours of the event.

(b) A Match Result Card (which has been duly signed by the Referee) must also be submitted in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.6.12 & 13.6.13 below which, if appropriate, states the number of minutes played, the score, and the reason for the abandonment.

13.6.9 Fixtures involving Suspended Clubs

Any Club which is suspended from playing rugby union football for disciplinary reasons will not be permitted to re-arrange any fixtures falling to be played within the period of the suspension. The effects thereof on the non-offending Clubs in the League concerned shall be dealt with by the Organising Committee of the League concerned under RFU Regulation 13.6.11 below.

13.6.10 Re-scheduling or Re-arranging Matches

(a) A League Match shall be replayed on the Next Available Weekend unless some other date is specified by the Committee.

(b) A Cup match shall be replayed prior to the next round on a date specified by the Organising Committee.

(c) League Matches (including rearranged matches) take precedence over all other matches other than RFU Cup Competitions.

13.6.11 Clubs unable to fulfil fixtures (League Competitions only)

(a) A Club must fulfil its matches in League Competitions in compliance with these Regulations.

(b) If the Organising Committee considers that a Club has unjustifiably failed to fulfil its obligations, it may deduct League points from that Club and/or order the match to be replayed (provided it has regard to promotion and relegation issues in any relevant League, including the effect on other clubs, and to the commitments of the Clubs concerned). For the avoidance of doubt, lack of players or insufficient front row players with Effective Registration whether through injury, illness or because of work or other commitments shall not be deemed to be a justifiable reason for not playing or seeking a postponement of a League Match.

(c) At Level 8 and below, where the Organising Committee has been advised by a Club that it is unable to fulfil a League fixture because it does not have at its disposal sufficient players having Effective Registration (or sufficient players capable of playing in the front row) and the Organising Committee is satisfied with the explanation, the Committee may prior to the non-playing of the League Match providing (i) the fixture with the opposition Club is honoured (albeit with unregistered or borrowed players) on the scheduled date or the Club was prepared to honour the fixture on the scheduled date, (ii) its non playing is not the fault of the Club with insufficient Effectively Registered players, and (iii) it takes account of the effect on other Clubs in the same League in its absolute discretion agree that:

(i) the League Match need not be replayed at a future date;

(ii) the result of the unplayed League Match will be a 0-0 win for the non-offending Club when the score will be determined by the Organising Committee;

(iii) there will be no competition points deduction for the Club that was unable to honour the fixture with players having Effective Registration.

(d) A Competition Match played pursuant to the authority of the Organising Committee under RFU Regulation 13.6.11(c) or any unplayed match where a notional 0-0 win or loss is recorded or where a match is not played for any other reason (for the purposes of this RFU Regulation 13.6.11(d) called 'an unplayed match') may at the end of the Season give rise to a requirement that the Organising Committee should cause an adjustment of match points of one or more Clubs to properly determine promotion (league winners or runners up) or relegation in accordance with RFU Regulation 13.2.6 to 13.2.10 (inclusive).

(i) An adjustment of match points will be made if either Club involved in the unplayed match is a contender for promotion (league winners or runners up) or relegation by virtue of an equal number of League points;

(ii) All match points in the corresponding fixtures of all other contending Clubs will be removed from the playing records (a corresponding fixture is defined as the scheduled fixture at the same venue as the unplayed match or in a League where Clubs play each other once only regardless of venue);

(iii) The adjustment referred to in Regulation 13.6.11(d)(i) above will not be made if it benefits the defaulting Club in the unplayed match to the detriment of another Club. Further where two or more Clubs have complete records their positions relative to each other will remain unchanged by adjustments caused by a defaulting Club in an unplayed match.

(e) Where it appears to the Organising Committee of the League concerned that a Club is incapable of completing its League programme for reasons unacceptable to the said Organising Committee, or if a Club voluntarily withdraws from a League, or if a Club is expelled or suspended from a League or from membership of the Competition, (for the purposes of RFU Regulation 13.6.11(f) below called the defaulting Club been deleted) the results of all matches played by it shall (subject to the power of the Organising Committee in RFU Regulation 13.6.11(f) hereunder) be deleted for all purposes and the final league table positions shall then be established under RFU Regulation 13.2.6 to 13.2.10 (inclusive) from all matches played between the remaining Clubs in the League.

(f) If the circumstances set out in Regulation 13.6.11(e) occur and the deletion of the results of all matches played by the defaulting Club causes a situation whereby another Club is deprived of promotion from or being a runner up in the League concerned or gives rise to a Club being relegated from the League concerned which event would not have occurred had the results of all matches played by the defaulting Club not been deleted the Organising Committee may exceptionally upon the application of the Club adversely affected (such application having been made within three working days of the final League match being played by the Club adversely affected or such earlier date as the Organising Committee reasonably decide and notified to the adversely affected Club) make an adjustment or League or match points or take such other action so that any adverse affect upon the Club is removed.

Notification of Match Results

13.6.12 Completion of Match Result Card

Match Result Cards will be supplied to all clubs by the RFU.

(a) Club Responsibility

(i) Each Club shall be responsible (i) for correctly completing the Match Result Card in accordance with these Regulations and any other relevant instructions and (ii) passing the completed Match Result Card to the Referee (or such person who is designated by him) no later than 15 minutes before kick-off.

(ii) At Levels 1-4 inclusive, each Club shall also be responsible for passing the computerised player registration list to the Referee together with the Match Result Card.

(iii) Once a Match Result Card has been passed to the Referee, it cannot be altered unless the other Club and Referee agree. If a Club refuses to agree to an alteration to a Match Result Card, this may be reported to the League Secretary within 48 hours of the completion of the match and the position will be considered by the Organising Committee.

(b) Referee

(i) At Levels 3 and 4, the Referee must check the Match Result Card and the computerised player registration list 15 minutes before the match commences.

(ii) At all Levels, the Match Result Card must be signed by the Referee and officials from both Clubs.

(iii) At all Levels, the Referee may make reference on the Match Result Card to any breach of any of these Regulations.

(c) Accuracy of Information

Each Club must ensure that information provided on a Match Result Card is accurate and legible. The provision of false or misleading information on players or replacements shall be a serious breach of this Regulation and may give rise to a severe penalty.

13.6.13 Notification of Results

(a) Match Results and Cards must be notified and submitted in accordance with the relevant Administration Instructions.

(b) In Cup Matches the Secretary of the Home Club shall be responsible for informing the person, firm or company appointed by the Committee of the result by 5.30 pm on match day and the match result cards submitted by both teams must reach whosoever is nominated by the Committee by 10.00 am on the Tuesday following the match.

13.6.14 Match Footage

(a) At Levels 4 and above, the home Club is responsible for supplying an un-edited copy of the match footage to the away Club. If the footage is sent by post it must be sent recorded delivery or with proof of posting and should arrive with the away Club within four days of the match.

(b) Clubs must also comply with RFU Regulation 19 regarding the provision of any match footage to a Disciplinary Panel.

13.7 Grounds

Pitch

13.7.1 It is the responsibility of the home club to ensure the availability of a pitch and to correctly and clearly mark its pitch.

13.7.2 Where an Artificial Pitch is to be used the Club where the pitch is situated must:

(a) comply with IRB Regulation 22; and

(b) if it proposes to use the Artificial Pitch in any match or matches in an RFU Competition inform the Committee in writing at least 30 days before the start of the Season or if during the Season at least 30 days (or such shorter period as the Committee may agree in an emergency) prior to such Artificial Pitch being used for a match in any RFU Competition.

Barrier from Field of Play

13.7.3 Each home Club playing a match in an RFU Competition must make provision:

(a) to ensure that (with the exception of Permitted Personnel as defined in 13.7.6 below) all other persons are kept at a reasonable distance from the playing area by permanent or temporary barriers; and

(b) for two Technical Areas one for each team in a match to which Permitted Personnel (when not undertaking their duties) are to be restricted during the match other than for the period of half-time.

13.7.4 At Level 5 and below and only where the club committee is satisfied it is impractical or unnecessary for permanent or temporary pitchside barriers or Technical Areas to be in place each Club in a match must (unless the referee agrees otherwise) ensure that:

(a) with the exception of Permitted Personnel, all other persons remain at a reasonable distance from the playing area, and;

(b) Permitted Personnel (when not undertaking their duties) remain on the side of the pitch designated by the home Club within an area bounded by the centre and ten metre line on the pitch and two metres from the side line of the pitch at the end of the pitch in which it's team plays the first half of the match.

13.7.5 Where there are permanent dugouts or shelters team replacements and coaching staff must confine themselves to them or remain outside the pitchside barriers, or if none, the playing enclosure (as defined by the Referee) other than when a player is about to replace a player on the pitch, when a player is temporarily suspended or for the periods of half-time.

Permitted Personnel

13.7.6 No more than four water carriers per team (including medical staff and replacement players) are permitted within the pitch side or perimeter fencing or other barrier. Water carriers may only be permitted onto the playing area for the purposes of taking water to the players at such times as shall be approved by the Referee (on any other occasion players must come to the touchline to get water).

13.7.7 Any player temporarily suspended when playing must remain in the 'Technical Area' or leave the playing enclosure and be clearly and readily identifiable to the Fourth Official. Any player temporarily suspended at Level 5 and below should remain in the 'Technical Area' (if provided) or remain between the posts in the in goal area which his team is attacking or in such other place as the referee may agree.

13.7.8 Any player sent off must leave the playing enclosure.

Floodlights

13.7.9 Any Club with the facility of and which plays matches under floodlights at any time of the Season is required to provide lights of sufficient lux value so as to ensure the playing of the match is safe. Illumination levels should be checked by a suitably qualified electrical engineer and recorded against the levels of light required for the standard of play and shall be not less than 200 lux for competitive matches and 100 lux for training save for Clubs at Level 6 and below the levels of light for competitive matches shall be not less than 100 lux. Clubs who use floodlights for matches in a RFU Competition are required to have them turned on at the start of the match or later if agreed by the visiting team or at the request of the Match Referee.

13.8 Finance

13.8.1 Funding

(a) The Committee shall notify the relevant Clubs of its decision regarding funding and distribute monies in its absolute discretion as it considers appropriate for the benefit of the Clubs in each RFU Competition.

(b) In respect of each RFU Competition, an annual fee may be payable by each participating Club in order to cover the administrative operating expenses. This fee will be determined annually by the Committee and shall be due and payable not later than 1 September in each year or on such other date as the Committee may determine from time to time.

(c) The Committee may establish a reserve fund for such purpose(s) as it may from time to time determine.

(d) Clubs failing to register claims for monies allocated to them by the date notified to them will not be eligible for payment of sponsorship or other monies.

13.8.2 Sponsorship, Financial Assistance or Gifts

Any proposal involving an offer of sponsorship, financial assistance or gifts for a RFU Competition or combination of RFU Competitions must be submitted to the RFU for approval which it will not refuse or delay unless such offer or the terms thereof would cause the RFU to be in breach of any other contract or commitment it may have to a third party.

13.8.3 Tickets

(a) In the Cup Competitions there shall be no complimentary tickets:

(i) at all matches in the semi finals the minimum charges be £5.00 for admission to the ground with a further £1.00 for a stand seat; and

(ii) at all matches in the semi finals of a Cup Competition, all spectators (including members, season ticket holders, debenture holders, sponsors and their guests) must be charged the advertised entrance, stand and car park prices or in any event if not so charged the income from the match to be distributed in accordance with Regulation 13.9.2 above must be credited with an amount equal to the advertised prices.

(b) In Play-Off matches complimentary tickets shall be available solely for playing squads (limited to 26), the Match Officials, medical staff, and those members of the home Club who are required to be at the match to fulfil a specific role on the day of the Match (e.g. ball boys, bar staff, gate attendants).

13.8.4 Gate Receipts

League

(a) Gross Gate Receipts shall be distributed as follows:

(i) in League Matches - to the home Club; and

(ii) in Play-Off Matches - the home Club and the away Club shall share (as to 40% for the away team and as to 60% for the home team) the Gross Gate Receipt, which shall also include car park and programme receipts.

Note: A Divisional Organising Committee may waive the requirements of Regulation 13.8.4(a)(i) either wholly or in part upon being requested to do so by a participating Club where it can demonstrate to the Committee that:

(i) The club is prohibited from 'taking a gate' or;

(ii) It is impractical for it to do so or;

(iii) The club has no history of 'taking a gate'

It is unlikely that this power will be exercised when the home club normally raises revenue by taking a gate including car parking and/or selling match programmes.

Cup

(b) In each semi-final of the Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase and Junior Vase (unless the match is played on a ground specified by the Committee), the Clubs will share the Gross Gate Receipts equally (including car park receipts and programmes sales less the cost of printing). Payment must be made to the away Club as to 20% of the estimated Gross Gate Receipts on the day of the match and the balance of the monies owing within 21 days of the match together with a clear statement showing how such payment is calculated.

(c) The RFU shall retain the gate receipt from the final of all Cup Competitions.

County Championship Competitions

(d) In all matches other than the Final, Gross Gate Receipts (which shall be the total of all monies received from admissions, car parking and programme sales) to a ceiling of £5,000.00 shall be shared, to help offset the cost of the away team, 70% for the home County and 30% for the away County. Any Gross Gate Receipts in excess shall belong to the home County.

U20

(e) In all matches other than the Final, the home Constituent Body shall be entitled to the Gross Gate Receipts, which shall include all car park and programme receipts.

13.8.5 Match Expenses

(a) The home Constituent Body, County or Club shall be responsible for all match expenses including (but not limited to):

(i) the costs of Match Officials (unless the RFU or a Federation or a local Referees Society requires otherwise);

(ii) the proper promotion of the match; and

(iii) the cost of providing a reasonable meal and other refreshments for the away Club's players, replacements and officials (not less than 26 in all) and the four Match Officials.

(b) The away Constituent Body, County or Club shall be responsible for its own travelling and other expenses. It shall also be responsible for the costs of a reasonable meal and other refreshments where the number of its players, replacements and officials exceeds 26 as set out at Regulation 13.8.5(a)(iii) above.

(c) In Cup Competitions the Committee may in its sole discretion make allocations from the reserve fund in order to assist Clubs in paying their travelling and other related expenses as follows:

(i) in the semi finals and the final of the Intermediate Cup;

(ii) in the semi finals and the final of the Senior Vase; and

(iii) in the semi finals and the final of the Junior Vase.

(Such allocation shall be made at least seven days before the date of such match and shall be paid as soon as practicable thereafter.)

13.8.6 Accounts

(a) All match accounts from Cup Competitions are subject to the scrutiny of the Committee.

(b) All match accounts in respect of matches played in the fourth and subsequent rounds of Cup Competitions must be forwarded by the home Club, together with written confirmation that 40% of the gross gate has been paid by the home Club to the away Club under Regulation 13.8.4 (a)(ii) and (b), to reach the Rugby Operations Director of the RFU (or such other person as the Committee may decide) at Twickenham within 14 days of the match.

(c) In respect of a Play-Off Match, the home Club will be responsible for preparing and having available for scrutiny by the relevant Organising Committee (or its appointed nominee) proper records showing the number of persons admitted to the Play-Off Match, the price(s) charged, details of car parking receipts and programmes sold in a form that enables the Organising Committee to satisfy itself as to the gross gate referred to in RFU Regulation 13.8.4(a)(ii) above.

13.9 Terms & Conditions

13.9.1 Legal Obligations

Each Club in consideration of the funding received by it from the RFU or any funding from a sponsor(s) whether or not received direct from the sponsor(s) or through the RFU or any third party for participating in any RFU Competition agrees that by commencing its programme of matches in any RFU Competition it has entered into a legally binding obligation with the RFU and as a separate covenant with each other Club in the RFU Competition and with any sponsor of the RFU Competition in which the Club plays:

(a) to comply in every particular with this RFU Regulation 13;

(b) to permit access to its premises during a match to any person authorised by the Committee or Organising Committee (with or without notice) to check compliance with all or any of this RFU Regulation 13;

(c) to maintain at all times during the Season a sufficient number of Effectively Registered fit and available players to ensure the ability of the Club to fulfil its programme of matches on the dates appointed by the Committee or any rearrangement thereof;

(d) to comply at all times with each and every obligation and requirement entered into by the RFU (or the Committee as the case may be) with third parties including but not limited to the terms and conditions of any sponsorship or other agreement provided that the particulars of any such obligations and requirements have been and prior to the commencement of its first match in the RFU Competition notified to the participating Club; and

(e) to comply and to ensure and procure that its members and players are aware of and agree to be bound by the RFU's disciplinary policies and their enforcement by the RFU in accordance with its published procedures.

13.9.2 Potential Claims for Damages

Each Club in consideration of the funding received by it for participating in any RFU Competition or in consideration of the RFU providing at no cost to the Club insurance in terms of the RFU approved policy by commencing its programme of matches in any RFU Competition agrees it has entered into a legally binding contractual obligation any breach of which may give rise to a claim for damages or compensation with each and every other Club in the RFU Competition and the RFU:

(a) to play all and each of its fixtures on the dates fixed pursuant to this RFU Regulation 13;

(b) to comply at all times with every applicable RFU Regulation.

13.9.3 Restrictions on Claims

Each Club in consideration of the funding received by it for participating in the RFU Competition or in consideration of the RFU providing at no cost to the Club insurance in terms of the RFU approved policy by commencing its programme of matches agrees it has entered into a legally binding obligation with the RFU, any sponsor of the RFU Competition and as a separate covenant with each other Club in the RFU Competition, Match Official involved in any match in the RFU Competition or cancellation or abandonment thereof that it will not hold liable or make any claim against any of the foregoing or the RFU or the Committee:

(a) for any loss cost charge compensation or expense arising out of or in connection with any kind of injury or illness suffered by any player, spectator or other person (in so far as is permitted by law);

(b) for any damage to property of any kind;

(c) for any other loss cost charge expense or damages be it economic financial consequential or for loss of profit expense incurred or otherwise and whether directly or consequential; and

(d) for any loss of any description howsoever arising or alleged to arise from or in relation to the result of any match in the RFU Competition or cancellation or postponement of any match arising out of or due to any decision or action that such official may take (or failed to have taken) under the Laws of the Game, these RFU Regulations or any other Rules or Regulations published in the Handbook or which have been properly introduced by the RFU or in respect of any opinion expressed under these Regulations or in respect of the normal procedures to hold play control, cancel or abandon a match.

13.9.4 Severability

If any provision in these RFU Regulations is found by any court or competent authority to be illegal, void or unenforceable, such provisions shall be deemed to be deleted and the remaining provisions shall continue in full force and effect. Such provision must also be replaced by a provision which is valid and enforceable and which gives effect to the spirit of the RFU Regulations.

13.10 Discipline & Dispute Resolution

13.10.1 Disciplinary Powers

(a) Specifically and without prejudice to such other powers as may have been granted or referred to elsewhere in RFU Regulation 13 and subject always to a right of appeal to an Appeal Panel by any Club or affected person, the Committee shall have power to discipline any Club for breach of any of these Regulations.

(b) The Committee shall have the right to delegate disciplinary powers (other than the power to expel or suspend from membership of the League Competition) for any breach of RFU Regulation 13 to an Organising Committee (which can in turn delegate all or part of its powers to a person acting as a League Secretary or to a sub-committee) subject to the rights of appeal as hereinafter provided.

13.10.2 Breach of these Regulations or Complaint or Dispute

(a) The Committee shall have discretion and may vary the procedure specified in RFU Regulation 13.10.2 and 19.13.1. where it considers this to be in the interests of an RFU Competition generally or the RFU.

(b) Matters concerning promotion, relegation and Level Transfers must be handled expeditiously at the end of the Season so that Clubs have adequate and proper time to make arrangements for the following season. Accordingly save only as to a complaint about a Level Transfer no complaint can be made under RFU Regulations 13.10.3 and/or 13.10.4 below more than 14 days after the end of the final League Match of the Season regardless as to whether the facts giving rise to the complaint were known or not.

Breach notified by Committee

13.10.3 Any alleged breach of any of RFU Regulation 13 by a Club or a Player shall be notified to that Club or Player by or on behalf of the Committee or League Secretary within 48 hours of knowledge of the occurrence or facts giving rise to the allegation and thereafter confirmed in writing within 96 hours of knowledge of the occurrence. The Club or Player shall have seven days from receipt of notification to respond. The Committee or League Secretary shall give a ruling (which may include a sanction as permitted under RFU Regulation 13) within a further seven days.

Breach notified by Third Party

13.10.4 Any alleged breach of RFU Regulation 13 (other than that referred to in RFU Regulation 13.10.3 above) or other complaint or dispute under RFU Regulation 13 shall be referred to the 'the recipient' who in the case of any RFU Cup Competition shall be the RFU Professional Rugby Director and in the case of other RFU Competitions shall be in the case of the NCA its secretary (or other person notified by it) and in other lower Levels the secretary of the League concerned; by telephone within 48 hours of knowledge of the occurrence giving rise to the complaint and thereafter submitted in writing within a further 48 hours. The complainant shall also notify any Club or other party complained of in writing (by post, fax or electronic mail) within five working days of knowledge of the occurrence giving rise to the complaint. The recipient upon receipt of the written complaint shall require the other party to the complaint (if applicable) to answer the complaint within seven days of the receipt of the written complaint and the recipient shall give a ruling (which may if the recipient deems it appropriate include a sanction as permitted under RFU Regulation 13) within a further seven days.

Review by Organising Committee

13.10.5 If the Club or Player (in respect of 13.10.3 above), or either party to the complaint or dispute or any other person or Club (in respect of 13.10.4 above) is dissatisfied with any ruling made under Regulations 13.10.3 or 13.10.4 above there shall be a right to request a review of the decision.

(a) In League Competitions, and all rounds prior to the Semi-Finals of the Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase and Junior Vase a right to request a review shall lie from the League Secretary or Cup administrator to the Organising Committee;

(b) In the Anglo-Welsh Cup, the British & Irish Cup and the Semi-Finals and Final of the Intermediate Cup, Senior Vase and Junior Vase a right to request a review shall lie from Rugby Operations Director to the Competitions Sub-Committee (or its delegate).

13.10.6 A right to a review shall only apply provided (i) notice in writing specifying the grounds of appeal is given to the Committee (or such other person as the Committee may have stipulated) within seven days (or 48 hours for Cup Competitions) of receipt of the decision referred to in 13.10.3 or 13.10.4 above and (ii) the notice is accompanied by such payment as is

stipulated by the Committee (or such other person as the Committee may have stipulated). The fee will be refunded if the appeal is successful.

13.10.7 If the Club or Player (in respect of 13.10.3 above) or either the complaining Club, or the other party to the complaint or dispute, or the Club or Player against whom the complaint is made (in respect of 13.10.4 above), requires an oral hearing, it must be requested in writing at the time the application under Regulation 13.10.5 is made (or in the case of the other party within 5 days of being made aware of the application under Regulation 13.10.4 being made). The Committee shall, within five days of receiving notice of such request, appoint a time, date and place for the hearing of such review. The person who has given a ruling shall not be entitled to take any part in the review of a ruling he has given other than to explain the reasons for his ruling.

13.10.8 Where a complaint is heard before the Committee, it shall be the obligation of the complainant to establish that on the balance of probabilities the complainant has an interest in the matter and the complaint is justified. If the Committee considers that the complaint is not justified it may dismiss it without hearing the representations of the Club or person against whom the complaint is made. The Committee cannot find a complaint proved without giving consideration to the evidence submitted by the person or Club against whom the complaint is made or where an oral hearing has been requested under Regulation 13.10.6 an opportunity to make representations or call relevant evidence.

13.10.9 The outcome of any complaint must be given in writing to the complainant within 35 days of receipt of the written complaint (together with the appropriate cheque) by the Committee.

RFU Appeals

13.10.10 Appeals from a decision shall be in accordance with RFU Regulation 19.13.

Sanctions

13.10.11

(a) Where the Committee finds there has been a breach of RFU Regulation 13, it may impose such sanction as it deems appropriate. Sanctions available to the Committee may include: loss of match or League points; transfer of League points; review of result; deduction of League points to be effective at the commencement of the following Season; deletion of Club's results from its League table; placing a Club at the bottom of its League; relegation of a Club by one or more Leagues (or Levels); a financial sanction, including monetary fine or compensation award payable to any third party, sponsor or Club; expelling or suspending any Club from membership of a Competition; or any such other penalty as the Committee deems appropriate in accordance with the Sanctions Guidelines set out in Appendix 1.

(b) Where the Committee imposes a financial sanction on a Club or a player in respect of a breach of RFU Regulation 13:

(i) any or each of the financial sanctions imposed under these Regulations must be paid within 14 days of notification (subject to any appeal);

(ii) where payment of a financial sanction is not made in accordance with Regulation 13.10.11(b)(i) above, the Committee may impose a further sanction, which may include the deduction of League points or Cup sanctions (subject to any appeal) as permitted in RFU Regulation 13. This further sanction is in addition to the fine which shall remain payable; and

(iii) where any financial sanction remains outstanding at the end of the Season, the Committee may make a recommendation to the Committee that the Club or a player be suspended from the Competition in the following Season and/or be deducted points in respect of the following Season.

(c) Where there is a second or subsequent breach of RFU Regulation 13, the Committee shall have the power to impose an additional sanction and/or take this into account when determining the appropriate sanction for the second or subsequent breach.

13.10.12 Dispute Resolution

(a) In the event of a dispute (including as to the amount of gate receipts to be paid) between any Constituent Body, County or Club with another Constituent Body, County or Club, the Committee may direct both Constituent Bodies, Counties or Clubs to submit to mediation or arbitration.

(b) If the Constituent Bodies, Counties or Clubs are directed to arbitrate, both Constituent Bodies, Counties or Clubs shall comply with any procedures or directions given by the arbitrator selected by the Committee; the decision of the arbitrator shall be final and binding on both Constituent Bodies, Counties or Clubs.

13.11 County & U20 Competitions

County Championship

13.11.1 All County Championship Competitions shall be played in accordance with RFU Regulation 13 and the specific regulations issued in relation to the County Championship Competitions.

National U20s

13.11.2 The National U20 Competition shall be played in accordance with RFU Regulation 13 and the specific regulations issued in relation to the National U20s Competition.

For a copy of the regulations relating to the above mentioned competitions, please contact the RFU Rugby Events and Competitions Department.