



## **SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND MEN'S LEAGUE - COMPETITION RULES 2019**

---

1. The "South West of England Men's League" (SWML) sits within tier five of the RFL competition structure. All teams participating in the SWML are bound by the RFL Operational Rules for Tiers Four, Five and Six (Operational Rules).

### **2. TABLES AND FIXTURES**

2.1 The League competition tables shall be compiled by the RFL, the positions in which shall be determined by the number of completion points gained with points being awarded as follows: two points for each Match won; and one point for each Match drawn.

2.2 The Club with the highest number of points shall be at the top of the league table and the Club with the lowest shall be at the bottom. Where Clubs have an equal number of points their relative positions shall be determined by point's difference so that the Club having the greater point's difference is placed above the Club with the lesser point's difference. The point's difference is calculated by subtracting the points scored against the Club from the points scored by the Club. If that still leads to a tie then the Club with the greater point's percentage during the Season will be placed in the higher position. The point's percentage is calculated by dividing the number of points scored by a Club by the number of points it concedes and multiplying by 100. If the positions are still equal, positions will be determined by the toss of a coin which shall be carried out at such time and place as the RFL shall direct and those Clubs concerned shall be entitled to witness the toss.

2.3 The notional scores in forfeited games shall be 24-0 and a point's deduction of 1 point. The League and Clubs will work to ensure, where possible games are played. 24-0 will only be used as a last resort.

### **3. PROMOTION/RELEGATION/PLAY OFFS**

3.1 The Management Group shall have the final decision on the composition of the League prior to the season commencing. League games will just count towards the League table with no play offs or grand final for this season as it's only play each club once.

3.2 If two or more clubs finish level on points at the end of a season the application of competition rule 2.2 will decide which team finishes above the other.

3.3 If a club withdraws from the League having failed to complete 50% of its scheduled games, then the club's record shall be expunged. If a club completes 50% or more of its scheduled games, the points will be awarded to the opponents in line with competition rule 2.3.

3.4 If a club is expelled or suspended, its record will be expunged, irrespective of how many games that club has played.

3.5 The format will be as follows; The top 4 teams after the regular rounds will contest the finals 1 v 2 the South West of England Grand Final, 3 v 4 South West of England Plate.



## **SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND MEN'S LEAGUE - COMPETITION RULES 2019**

---

### **4. MEMBERSHIP**

- 4.1 Membership of the SWML is open to all clubs playing rugby league within the South West of England Region who are capable of meeting any Annual Entry Criteria as specified by the Management Group.
- 4.2 Applications from new clubs must be submitted in writing to the Competition Officer by the 15 January each year. Membership shall be granted to a club for one season only and all clubs must reapply for membership each year.
- 4.3 The annual subscription for membership of the league shall be £50 per first team and £30 for any additional team from the same club.
- 4.4 Subscription for membership of the League shall be reviewed annually and paid by 31<sup>st</sup> March each season. Any team not having paid its annual subscription by this date will not be allocated competitive fixtures for the remainder of the season until such fees are paid.
- 4.5 Each Club will be required to ensure that the Volunteers listed below are appropriately qualified (where applicable) and registered on LeagueNet:
- Coaches
  - Club Welfare Officer
  - First Aiders
  - Touchline Manager
  - Club Secretary
  - Club Chairman

### **5. START AND END DATE OF THE COMPETITION**

- 5.1 The SWML Management Group shall determine the commencement date of its competition and the date upon which it shall cease, these dates will fit between the 1<sup>st</sup> March and 30<sup>th</sup> November in any year.

### **6. PLAYER REGISTRATIONS**

- 6.1.1 All players should annually register to the Club using the RFL LeagueNet system. The League will circulate a link to the registration portal to the Clubs to commence the registration process.
- 6.1.2 There is no restriction on the maximum number of players allowed to register per team in the SWML, however fifteen is the minimum number per team and scheduled fixtures will be refused until 15 players are registered.
- 6.2 **Professional Players**



## **SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND MEN'S LEAGUE - COMPETITION RULES 2019**

---

6.2.1 A player registered with the RFL as a contracted professional may not register or play in the SWML Competition unless his professional club provides permission in writing for him to do so. The Competition Officer must approve the registration of such players.

### **6.3 Transfers**

6.3.1 Clubs may register or transfer players from other clubs, within tiers four, five and six of the competition structure by simply completing a transfer form and the standardised registration form in the usual manner. The completed form when duly signed must be in the hands of the Competition Officer at least 24 hours prior to the game's commencement.

6.3.2 All players must fulfil all financial obligations to their current club before any transfer to another club, including professional clubs will be permitted. This also applies to a player wishing to sign for a different club in future seasons.

6.3.3 The deadline date for transferring of players shall be the 31<sup>st</sup> July each year

## **7 FIXTURES**

7.1 Any club wishing to rearrange a fixture must consult their opponents, agree a new date and complete a fixture amendment form. The completed fixture amendment form must be forwarded to the Competition Officer for their approval. If clubs cannot agree a new date within 14 days of the original postponement then the competition officer will issue a new date for the fixture. If the fixture is not played as instructed by the competition officer the points will be awarded to the non-offending club.

7.2 All games must be played as per the fixture list, or the points for such games forfeited, unless an alternative date mutually agreeable by both teams and the Competition Officer can be sought.

7.3 Where programmed into the fixture programme, backlog dates should not be considered as a free weekend and the team should be prepared to be allocated fixtures on these days.

7.4 Postponements will not be considered because of injuries or any other matter not considered exceptional.

7.5 Any club desiring to arrange a friendly must seek permission from the Competition Officer. No friendly fixtures shall be arranged on a League fixture date without prior approval of the Competition Officer.

7.6 Clubs must accept fixtures given at seven days' notice by the Competition Officer.

7.7 If a club fails to fulfil a fixture, the Club Secretary must inform the Competition Officer that they are conceding the points. (Or the CO will automatically have deducted points)

7.8 Any club failing to play a fixture on a scheduled date will be made to play the reverse fixture, if it has not already been played or forfeited, on their opponents' ground. Clubs failing to fulfil fixtures will be deducted competition points as per competition rule 2.3



## SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND MEN'S LEAGUE - COMPETITION RULES 2019

---

- 7.9 Any club failing to fulfil a fixture must pay reasonable expenses to the non-offending club, as determined by the SWML Management Group. This may include the referee's full fee and expenses.
- 7.10 Any club which fails to notify their opponents of its inability to raise a team 60 minutes before the scheduled kick-off, shall also be liable to pay any expenses, up to a maximum of £40, which their opponents may incur, including kit washing, or medical costs such as strapping.
- 7.11 In the case of a home club failing to fulfil a fixture, a visiting club that has travelled, may claim up to a maximum of £50 towards transport costs.
- 7.12 If a club running two or more teams is unable to raise a team on any particular day, then the highest ranked team fixture must be played.
- 7.13 Any club with more than one team at home, in any competition, must provide an alternative pitch in case of a clash of fixtures

### 8 MATCH DAY OPERATIONS

- 8.1 All games shall, unless there is mutual agreement between competing clubs to the contrary, be organised and staged on Saturday afternoons with a kick off time scheduled for 2.30pm. If fixtures need to be played mid-week then the Competition Officer must be notified at least one week prior to the scheduled fixture.
- 8.2 To maintain the continuity of the playing programme the Competition Officer shall be empowered, if necessary, to bring forward to an earlier date fixtures scheduled for later in the season.
- 8.3 **Contacting Opponents**
- 8.3.1 In accordance with the Operational Rules it is the responsibility of the home Club, during the week preceding a game, to contact both its opponents and the relevant Match Officials regarding team colours and ground directions.
- 8.3.2 In the event there is a clash of colours the away team must wear an alternative strip.
- 8.4 **Team Sizes, Short Sided Games and Loaning of Players**
- 8.4.1 A maximum of 20 players may be named for each side taking part in a fixture including cup fixtures, play-off games and finals.
- 8.4.2 Clubs are not compelled to 'loan' players. It is their discretion whether they do so or not.
- 8.4.3 'Loaned' players are to be clearly endorsed on the Official Team Sheet - as "**LOAN**"
- 8.4.4 If 'loaning' occurs, the game remains an official fixture. The score-line and result of the actual match stands officially. In other words, if team 'A' loans players to team 'B' to make up a side,



## **SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND MEN'S LEAGUE - COMPETITION RULES 2019**

---

and then team 'B' wins the game 10-0, the result stands as a 10-0 victory to team 'B'. This fact needs to be borne in mind by any club considering 'loaning' players on match day.

### **8.5 Post Match Arrangements**

- 8.5.1 The home club shall be responsible for supplying all the competing players, club officials and appointed Match Officials with a suitable post match meal. The visiting club is obligated to accept such hospitality.
- 8.5.2 In the case of away clubs failing to fulfil a fixture the home club may also claim up to a maximum of £50 towards refreshment costs. Any club which will not be requiring refreshments should notify its opponents in advance of the game, otherwise the club will be liable to pay £50 compensation to the home club.

### **8.6 Team Sheet**

- 8.6.1 Official team sheets must be completed correctly before the commencement of matches and shall be signed by a recognised official from each club and the Match Official.
- 8.6.2 Completed team sheets should include the full forename and surname (no initials), of all participants and must be sent by the home club official to the Competition Administrator. Details of the player of the match from both the participating clubs must also be included. The failure of a club to complete and return team sheets correctly will incur a mandatory fine as deemed appropriate.
- 8.6.3 It is the responsibility of the both clubs to ensure that the team sheet information is entered on the LeagueNet system within 48 hours following the completion of the game. Failure to do so will result in an £10 administration fine.
  - 8.6.3.1 In addition to 8.6.3 the home Club must also send to the Competition Administrator a signed team sheet from the match.

### **8.7 Reporting Results**

- 8.7.1 The home club, in consultation with the Match Official and designated Administrator from the opposition, must agree the result immediately on completion of the game and enter the result onto LeagueNet. Failure to do so will result in a £10 administration fine.

### **8.8 Abandonment of Games**

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

### **8.9 Postponements**

- 8.9.1 In the event of the home club suspecting that its ground will not be fit for play owing to adverse weather conditions or other cause, the home club must immediately call a Match Official on



## **SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND MEN'S LEAGUE - COMPETITION RULES 2019**

---

the approved list recognised by the RFL to carry out a ground inspection. If the Match Official states the ground is not fit for play, and in their opinion, there is no chance of it being so before the scheduled kick off, then that decision must be communicated immediately to the visiting Club, appointed Match Official and the Competition Officer. Any club failing to fulfil this instruction may be subject to disciplinary action.

8.9.2 All postponements must be notified to the Competition Officer by 12.00 p.m. on Saturday and 5.00 p.m. midweek.

### **8.10 Requests for Postponement due to Representative Rugby League**

8.10.1 A club with two or more players selected to participate in a RFL recognised representative fixture (as determined by the Operational Rules) may apply to postpone its fixture scheduled that weekend.

8.10.2 Such club applications should be submitted in writing and lodged with the Competition Officer and copied to the clubs opponents for receipt within 96 hours of the scheduled representative match.



## **SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND MEN'S LEAGUE - COMPETITION RULES 2019**

---

### **9 DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSIONS AND FINES**

- 9.1 A SWML discipline 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 club, player, official or other person, subject to the Operational Rules, found guilty of misconduct and/or breach of these rules and/or breach of the Operational Rules and to order them to meet any costs incurred.
- 9.2 A written report of a Match Official on the misconduct of any club, player or official must be sent via email to the Competition Officer with a copy to the offending club for receipt inside 48 hours from the conclusion of the game.
- 9.3 Reports of brawling – defined as three or more players involved - should via email be sent by the Match Official, for receipt within 48 hours of a game's conclusion, to the Competition Officer. Separate copies of the report must be lodged by the Match Official with the clubs concerned.
- 9.4 Any club which does not receive from the Match Official within 48 hours a report outlining a dismissal or brawl having occurred should contact the Competition Officer immediately. The failure of a club to receive a written report will not prevent action being dealt by the relevant discipline committee.
- 9.5 A reported club, player, official or any other person may, to defend an allegation of misconduct, send a letter for receipt by the Competition Officer within ten days of the date of the match. The club or such persons may in their own defence request a personal appearance and/or bring witnesses to the hearing, provided that they notify the Competition Officer within ten days of the alleged offence and send with it a deposit of £20.00 payable to the "RFL" The deposit shall be refunded at the hearing, provided that the appellant or their designated representative attends in person.
- 9.6 Unedited DVD evidence shall be an accepted method through which to defend or confirm the alleged actions that have been reported to the committee by a Match Official.
- 9.7 Club secretaries or their deputies, pursuant to the hearing having not received a verdict after five days, should contact the Competition Officer regarding the result.
- 9.8 Should a case of alleged assault by a player, club official or spectator be lodged it will be reported to the Competition Officer by a Match Official. The Match Official will then be instructed to make himself 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.
- 9.9 A player's suspension shall commence on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday following the meeting at which the suspension was imposed, with the exception of any suspension of six matches or more which shall take immediate effect.
- 9.10 All organised competition games, (including University and College RL fixtures, and RFL representative games) provided that they were arranged prior to the player's offence may be counted towards his list of suspended games.



## **SOUTH WEST OF ENGLAND MEN'S LEAGUE - COMPETITION RULES 2019**

---

- 9.11 A suspended player is not permitted to play in any other game of Rugby League until any fines are paid and his suspension is served and the completed Notification of Games Served Form has been completed and received and approved by the Competition Officer. Any player or club violating this rule will be fined not less than £100 and the offending player shall be suspended for a further six matches, and will not be able to play until such time as the fine is paid. In the event of a game having being won by a club fielding a player under suspension then the competition points gained shall be forfeited automatically. The Management Group, should it deem appropriate, reserves the right to apply other sanctions which may include a club's suspension or expulsion from the competition.
- 9.12 All fines, payable to the RFL must be settled within 28 days and must be forwarded to the Competition 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 club's fixtures will be suspended.

### **10 APPEALS**

- 10.1 All appeals against disciplinary sanctions imposed by the SWML are to be dealt with by an independent RFL appointed panel.
- 10.2 Clubs have the right to appeal within 14 days of a decision made only if they have attended the disciplinary panel meeting or submitted a written defence. A £40.00 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 Competition Administrator.
- 10.3 An appeal by a club may be based solely on the following grounds: a) the finding of guilt or b) the severity of sentence imposed.
- 10.4 No member of the Management Group actively involved in a decision taken at the initial hearing other than the Competition Officer - who has no voting rights - shall be permitted to adjudicate on matters which will be the subject of appeal.
- 10.5 Adjudication by the Appeals Panel precludes the right of individual players or their clubs towards seeking a further representation.