

Championship, National and Community League and Competition Rules

1. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of these L&C Rules, the following terms shall be defined as follows:

- (i) **Club** means a rugby club represented by a team participating in any Union Competition
- (ii) **Championship Team** means any club playing in Championship and Championship A
- (iii) **Championship and Championship A** means the league between Premiership A and the National Leagues
- (iv) **Competition** means any rugby union Competition administered by the Union
- (v) **Community League Teams** means any club playing in Community League 1 or Community League 2
- (vi) **Dual Registered Player** means a Championship Player who is dual registered with a Premiership Club and listed in a Premiership Squad in accordance with Rules 3.3 and 7
- (vii) **Effective Registration** means the Player has been registered by the Player's Club online in the Union's database for the relevant Season
- (viii) **Hong Kong Qualified (HKQ)** means a Player who is World Rugby eligible to represent Hong Kong in an international test Match
- (ix) **Working Holiday Visa** means a visa that is granted to a Player under the Hong Kong Working Holiday Scheme
- (x) **Hong Kong Work Visa** means a visa that entitles a Player to work in Hong Kong other than a Working Holiday Visa
- (xi) **L&C Rules** means these Premiership League and Competition Rules
- (xii) **League** means the domestic XV's rugby Competitions administered by the Union
- (xiii) **League Competition** means a Competition within the League
- (xiv) **LFCP** means the League Fixture Control Panel, which is authorised to make determinations on issues arising under the L&C Rules. The LFCP will consist of up to eight members of the rugby community appointed by the Union each Season to represent a cross section of Clubs. The Union will nominate one of the members to perform the role of Chairperson. Currently the LFCP members are:

Men's Premiership, Premiership A and Women's Premiership

Peter Else (Chair)

Don Rider

Paddy Donovan

Alexandra Staff

Men's and Women's Championship and National Leagues

John Bruce (Chair)

John Carroll

Wu Yuet-ming

Paul Deayton

Alexandra Staff

- (xv) **Macau Work Visa** means a Player who has acquired a work permit (aka, "blue card") that allows the Player to live and work in Macau
- (xvi) **Match** means any rugby union Match administered by the Union
- (xvii) **National League** shall mean the Competition within the League below the Championship League
- (xviii) **National Junior Performance Player** means a Player who is below the age of 20 throughout the season and a HKRU national age grade representative at U18, U19 or U20 and fulfils World Rugby's senior playing criteria.
- (xix) **Non Premiership Club** means any Club that is not a Premiership Club
- (xx) **Non-Qualified Year 3 Player (NQ3)** means a Player who is in his third year of residency in Hong Kong and is not yet but will become World Rugby Eligible to represent Hong Kong in an international test Match on completing 3 years residency.
- (xxi) **Non-Qualified Player (NQ)** means a Player who is not World Rugby Eligible to represent Hong Kong in an international test Match and who must hold a Hong Kong Work Visa, Student Visa or Working Holiday Visa and fall within Rule 6.3 for the Player's Premiership Club.
- (xxii) **Premiership Club** means HKFC, HK Scottish HKU Sandy Bay, Kowloon, Valley and USRC Tigers
- (xxiii) **Premiership Squad** means the squad of 32 Players that each Premiership Club has registered with the Union and listed as its Premiership Squad in accordance with Rules 3.2 and 6.1.
- (xxiv) **Premiership League** means the highest League Competition within the League

- (xxv) **Player Transfer Form** means a form the Player must sign and have counter signed by the Player's current Club chairman or Club coaching officer and new Club chairman or Club coaching officer
- (xxvi) **Player** means a Player playing a Match administered by the Union
- (xxvii) **Season** means the League season, which typically runs from September to March
- (xxviii) **Student Visa** means a visa that is granted to a Player entitling the Player to study in Hong Kong
- (xxix) **Trained Front Row Player** means a player who is suitably trained and experienced to play in the front row for the division and Match in which the player is playing.
- (xxx) **Union** means the Hong Kong Rugby Union
- (xxxi) **World Rugby Eligible** means the Player is eligible to represent Hong Kong in an international test Match based on the criteria specified by World Rugby

2. COMPETITIONS

2.1 The Union controls and is responsible for the administration of the Competitions.

2.2 Save for any exception set out in the rules and regulations of any particular Competition, the L&C Rules shall apply to all Clubs and all Competitions during the Season-with effect from 1 September.

2.3 The entry procedures, format, divisions, sequence, timing and duration of the Competitions shall be determined by the Union no later than 31 August.

3. EFFECTIVE REGISTRATION

3.1 A Player shall hold Effective Registration with the Union once they have been registered by a Club online in the Union's database for the relevant Season. The only evidence admissible of a Player's Effective Registration with a Club on any particular date is the computerised listing held by the Union.

3.2 Championship Squad Registration Each Championship Club must register 25 Players with the Union whom it lists as its Championship Squad at least one week before the first Championship fixture of the Season. Each Championship Squad must comply with Rule 6 below.

3.3 Dual Registration No Player may hold Effective Registration with more than one Club at any time unless approved by the LFCP, with the exception of a Dual Registered Player. A Premiership Club may dual register up to 6 Players from a Championship Club, including National Junior Performance Players. A Dual Registered Player is eligible to be selected for either or both Clubs for which the Player is registered on any given Match day and may play in the Premiership or Premiership A division throughout the Season without limitation. Dual Registered Players must be registered as such with the Union by 1 December 2018. A Premiership Club may de-register and replace all of their Dual Registered Players between 16 December 2018 to 7 January 2019.

3.4 Player Transfer A Player who wishes to transfer Clubs may do so between 1 April and 1 December by completing and submitting to the Union a Player Transfer Form signed by all relevant parties. A copy of the Player Transfer Form can be downloaded [here](#). If the current Club refuses to sign the Player Transfer Form for any reason it will be treated as a registration dispute and will be referred to the LFCP for resolution. In the event of a registration dispute, the Player may not transfer to or play for the new Club unless and until permitted by the LFCP. A Player may not transfer Clubs after 1 December for the remainder of the relevant Season, irrespective of whether the Clubs concerned are in agreement.

3.5 New Players (currently not registered to any other Club) may be registered with a Club between 31 October 2018 and 7 January 2019

3.6 No Club may field a Player for a team in any Competition Match who:

3.6.1 Does not hold Effective Registration with that Club (save and except for Dual Registered Players) or

3.6.2 Is currently under suspension under the L&C Rules or the Laws of the Game.

4. LOSS OF EFFECTIVE REGISTRATION

4.1 A Player will cease to have Effective Registration with a Club:

4.1.1 Upon having Effective Registration with another Club (save and except for Dual Registered Players); or

4.1.2 Upon having Effective Registration cancelled or suspended by the LFCP for any reason; or

4.1.3 Where Effective Registration is invalidated pursuant to L&C Rule 5 below;

4.1.4 Where and from the date upon which a union, with whom a Player is currently registered and to whom a Club had applied for consent to register a Player (who had been granted Effective Registration pending a response from that union), advises that any consent or clearance is refused or withdrawn or delayed.

5. FALSE OR MISLEADING INFORMATION

5.1 If a Club or Player supplies incorrect or misleading information to the Union on the online Player registration system the Effective Registration will be void. A financial penalty may also be imposed as the LFCP considers appropriate.

6. Championship Squad Registrations

6.1 Clubs must register a minimum squad of 25 players by Friday 21st September 2018

6.2 Championship registered squad players will be allowed to play across into Championship A during the league rounds however will be subject to rule 11.4 and 11.5 during grand finals (inclusive of semi-finals and finals).

Note: For the 2018-19 season DB Pirates will combine with Gai Wu. For the purpose of these rules and regulations DB Pirates will be the designated 1st team that plays in the Championship and Gai Wu will be the designated 2nd team that plays in Championship A. There will be no restrictions on players between these clubs playing across into Championship and Championship A.

6.3 Front Row Forwards

6.3.1 All registered squads (rule 6.1) must contain 4 Trained Front Row Players

7. DUAL REGISTRATIONS

7.1 A Premiership Club may register up to a maximum of 6 Players registered from a Championship club with prior agreement of the Player and his Club. These Players must be registered by name with the HKRU and be clearly identified as "Dual Registered Players" with the Premiership Club. A Dual Registered Player may only play in the Premiership or Premiership A division for the Premiership Club with whom he is registered.

7.2 Should a Premiership Club breach Rule 7, any forfeiture of League Competition points imposed by the LFCP in relation to the breach will apply to the Club team that played the Dual Registered Player only. No additional forfeiture of League Competition points may be imposed in relation to the Premiership team.

8. NAMED CHAMPIONSHIP SQUAD PLAYERS DROPPING DOWN AND PLAYING IN NATIONAL LEAGUE AND COMMUNITY LEAGUE

8.1 Named Championship squad players cannot drop down into the National or Community Leagues.

8.2 Any Championship A player who drops down into the National or Community Leagues will be subject to rule 11.4 and 11.5.

8.3 Should a Championship Club breach Rule 8, any forfeiture of League Competition points imposed by the LFCP in relation to the breach will apply to the Club team that played the Championship Squad Player only. No additional forfeiture of League Competition points may be imposed in relation to the Championship team.

9. NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY LEAGUE PLAYERS PLAYING UP IN THE PREMIERSHIP AND CHAMPIONSHIP

9.1 For any Premiership League fixture, a Premiership Club may name 4 additional Players who are not named in the Premiership Squad to play for the Premiership team provided those Players are registered with the Club on the Union's online database and do not hold a Working Holiday Visa or Holiday Visa.

9.2 There will be no limitations placed on players playing up into Championship and Championship A from the National or Community League however rule 11.4 and 11.5 will apply to those players during grand finals.

10. NATIONAL JUNIOR PERFORMANCE PLAYERS

10.1 A National Junior Performance Player who has been registered with a Premiership Club is eligible to play for the Premiership team of that Club. Any such Players may be selected and play for the Premiership team in addition to the Premiership Squad and may play throughout the leagues with no restrictions.

10.2 A Premiership Club may dual register National Junior Performance Players from a Non Premiership Club. Any such Players may play for the Premiership team of that Club. These Players are in addition to the named 32 man Premiership squad. Appearances for a Premiership Club will have no effect on the Player being eligible to play for his Club in league fixtures and/or Grand Final games.

11. CHAMPIONSHIP MATCH DAY SQUADS

11.1 Championship

11.1.1 Championship match day squad 25: must contain 3 trained front row forwards

11.2 Championship, National and Community League Match Day Team Submissions

11.2.1 Championship teams are required to submit a completed team sheet of its match day squad to the Union's Rugby Operations Leader (Tertiary & Club) by midday on the day prior to the game. The team sheet shall clearly indicate the name and shirt number of each player.

11.2.2 Upon the request of the team manager, coach or captain, National League and Community League teams are required to submit a completed team sheet of its match day squad to the opposition coach or manager on the day of the fixture. The team sheet shall clearly indicate the name and shirt number of each player.

11.3 Championship, Championship A, National and Community Leagues teams are required to submit a Team Result Sheet to the Union's Rugby Operations Leader (Tertiary & Club) by 6pm on the Wednesday following a Saturday match, or if the match is played on a day other than a Saturday by 6pm on the third working day following the conclusion of the game. The Result Sheet should clearly show the names of all players that participated, along with point's scorers and the recipients of any yellow and/or red cards.

11.4 Championship, Championship A and National League teams are required to submit a team sheets prior to grand final Semis, and Finals. For players to be eligible for grand finals they must have played in 5 league matches within the designated league and must not have breached rule 11.5.

11.5 Once a player has played 7 or more matches in a higher Division they cannot play down in a lower division during the Grand Championship, e.g. if Player A has played a total of 16 games during the league season of which 9 were at Championship A level and 7 at National League they can not participate in the National League grand finals, unless they receive dispensation from LFCP.

Note: This rule does not apply to dual registered players in rule 7 and national junior performance players (10)

12. TEAM MANAGEMENT, REPLACEMENTS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Championship, Championship A, National League, Community Leagues

12.1 Will play “rolling subs” with unlimited interchanges.

12.2 Teams will be allowed a maximum of 10 replacement players unless prior agreement for more replacement players has been agreed upon by both team captains, coaches or managers. Additional players must be named on the team sheet.

12.3 For all Leagues a minimum of 10 players must be on the pitch for a scheduled 15s match to go ahead.

12.4 A team must have a minimum of 5 players who can safely contest a scrum at the beginning of a match.

12.5 It is the team’s responsibility to ensure that all front row players and potential front row replacements are suitably trained. It is not for the referee to determine whether any player is suitably trained to play in the front row.

13. SCRUMS – Championship, National League and Community League 1 and 2

Uncontested Scrums

13.1 Teams that have a full match day squad but are unable to safely form a contestable scrum at the start of the match can choose to play the match with uncontested scrums; however the team that cannot safely form a fully contestable scrum will be reduced to 14 players throughout the duration of the game.

13.2 When a front row player leaves the playing area, whether through injury or temporary or permanent suspension, the referee will enquire at the time whether the team can continue with contested scrums. If the referee is informed that the team will not be able to contest the scrum then the referee will order uncontested scrums. A player whose departure has caused the referee to order uncontested scrums cannot be replaced, meaning the team will play with one less player.

13.3 Uncontested scrums as a result of a sending off, temporary suspension or injury must be played with eight players per side.

Note: Community League 2 will be the exception to this rule as it will have uncontested scrums for the first round followed by contested scrums during the second round, in the event a team cannot contest scrums the match will still go ahead with 15 players and uncontested scrums.

14. POSTPONEMENT OF MATCHES

14.1 Subject to Rules 14.2 and 14.3; a Club must fulfil its Competition fixture obligations in respect of any Match on the date and at the time appointed for such fixture.

14.2 A Match may be rearranged where the Referee decides a Match should not be played or should be abandoned after less than fifty (50) minutes have been played because of weather conditions or for any other reason. The Referee's decision as to whether a Match should be played or abandoned shall be final. If a Match is abandoned after 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 unless otherwise directed by the LFCP if the abandonment arose in part due to a breach of World Rugby Law 10 or the HKRU Code of Conduct.

14.3 Subject to the approval of the Union, a Match may be rearranged where both teams agree a Match should be postponed to a later date.

14.4 In the event that a Match is to be rearranged in accordance with L&C Rule 14.2 and 14.3, the fixture will be re-scheduled for a designated "make-up" weekend. In the event one or both of the teams are already scheduled to play on all available "make-up" weekends, then the game will be rescheduled at a time, date and venue either as both teams shall agree, or in the absence of agreement as determined by the Union in its absolute discretion.

15. FAILURE TO HONOUR FIXTURES

15.1 Where the LFCP is of the view that a Club has unjustifiably failed to fulfil its Competition fixture obligations, the Club shall be treated as having forfeited each remaining Match in the relevant Competition in accordance with L&C Rule 18.4 and may be deducted up to a further four League Competition points and receive a monetary fine, as the LFCP considers appropriate.

16. EFFECT OF FORFEITURE OF 3 OR MORE MATCHES

16.1 Any team which forfeits 3 or more Matches in the same Competition shall, in addition to any other penalty, be liable to disqualification from that Competition, to be decided at the absolute discretion of the LFCP.

17. GENERAL COMPETITION RULES

17.1 First Aid or Physio Requirement

17.1.1 Clubs should ensure that they have sufficient First Aiders or Physio and equipment present at each fixture. Neither the Union nor any Referee is obliged to provide or be responsible for First Aid.

17.1.2 Where a First Aider or Physio is present, the Referee should do no more than allow an injured Player to leave the field to receive treatment or allow the First Aider or Physio onto the field to administer treatment. The First Aider or Physio may come onto the field to administer treatment without notice when required.

17.1.3 Where no First Aider or Physio is present, the Laws of the Game provide that the Referee shall decide whether the Player may be replaced due to injury. There is no obligation on a Referee to provide or to be responsible for First Aid.

17.2 Team uniforms and Players Personal Equipment:

17.2.1 In the event of a kit clash, it is the responsibility of the designated away team to wear an alternate kit. In the event of any dispute the Match referee will be the arbitrator of whether or not a kit clash exists.

17.2.2 All Players must wear a mouth guard during HKRU sanctioned fixtures.

18. LEAGUE COMPETITION AND POINTS

18.1 Championship and Championship A will contest 2 rounds of league.

Championship teams will also contest a weekly "league cup" that will start with the team that currently holds it, the team will defend it on every playing weekend. The Cup must be defended regardless of the location of fixture.

National League: will play 1 round robin of ranking matches (7 matches each)

Teams will then be split into NL A (1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th) and NL B (5th, 6th, 7th and 8th)

All points will revert to zero (no carry-over of points from ranking tournament), Teams will play two more round robins within their pools, where a NL A and NL B league winner will be crowned.

Community League 1: will play 1 round robin of ranking matches (11 matches each)

Teams will then be split into CL 1A (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th) and CL 1 B (7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th)

All points will revert to zero (no carry-over of points from ranking tournament), Teams will play one more round robin within their pools, where a CL1 A and CL1 B league winner will be crowned

Community League 2 will play 2 rounds of league.

18.2 Points will be awarded for League Competition Matches as follows:

4 League Competition points for a win

2 League Competition points for a draw

1 League Competition point for a loss by 7 Match points or less

1 League Competition point for scoring 4 tries or more

No points will be awarded for a bye or for a loss by more than 7 Match points

18.3 Where one or more teams have equal League Competition Points at any stage of the Season, the position of each team in the relevant League Competition at that stage shall be determined firstly by the number of wins achieved and then on the basis of match points differential. A Club with a larger number of wins shall be placed higher than a Club with the same number of League Competition points but fewer wins.

If teams have equal League Competition points and an equal number of wins then a team with a larger difference between match points "for" and match points "against" shall be placed higher in the relevant League Competition than a team with a smaller difference between match points "for" and match points "against".

Should two teams have the same number of League Competition points and the same match points difference, the team having scored more match points "for" shall be placed higher in the relevant League Competition than the team having the lesser number of match points "for".

If the above does not establish different League Competition positions then the team in the higher position shall be the team that has achieved the higher aggregate match points scored by it in the same season against the other team.

18.4 Match Forfeitures

5 competition points will be awarded to a team that gains a forfeiture or is awarded match points by the LFCP. 1 competition point will be deducted from a team that forfeits a Match The team receiving the forfeiture will receive 20 points for and nil points against The team forfeiting the fixture will receive nil points for and 20 points against.

19. GRAND FINAL RULES

19.1 For Championship the top 4 teams will take part in Grand Championships.

Semi Final 1: 1st Vs 4th

Semi Final 2: 2nd Vs 3rd

Final: Winner of Semi Final 1 Vs Winner of Semi Final 2

For Semi-finals the higher ranked teams will enjoy home advantage where feasible.

Where feasible the Final will be played at King's Park, however this will be subject to scheduling.

19.2 For Championship A the top 4 teams will take part in Grand Championships.

Semi Final 1: 1st Vs 4th

Semi Final 2: 2nd Vs 3rd

Final: Winner of Semi Final 1 Vs Winner of Semi Final 2

For Semi-finals the higher ranked teams will enjoy home advantage where feasible.

Where feasible the Final will be played at King's Park, however this will be subject to scheduling.

19.3 For National League A top 4 teams will go through to the semi finals

Semi Final 1: 1st Vs 4th

Semi Final 2: 2nd Vs 3rd

Final: Winner of Semi Final 1 Vs Winner of Semi Final 2

For Semi-finals the higher ranked teams will enjoy home advantage where feasible.

Where feasible the Final will be played at King's Park, however this will be subject to scheduling.

19.4 For National League B top 4 teams will go through to the semi finals

Semi Final 1: 1st Vs 4th

Semi Final 2: 2nd Vs 3rd

Final: Winner of Semi Final 1 Vs Winner of Semi Final 2

For Semi-finals the higher ranked teams will enjoy home advantage where feasible.

Where feasible the Final will be played at King's Park, however this will be subject to scheduling.

20. DURATION OF MATCHES

20.1 All Leagues 35 minutes x 2 with 5 minute interval

20.2 Stoppage time including interval, water breaks and injury time shall be determined by the Referee.

20.3 In the event that a team is not prepared to commence a Match within 15 minutes of the scheduled kick-off time as adjudged by the Match Referee, the opposition team has the right to claim forfeit should they wish to do so.

21. DRAWN MATCHES

21.1 If there is a draw in any knockout competition:

21.1.1 Following an interval of five minutes, extra time of 10 minutes each way (with an interval of 5 minutes) shall be played. The first period of extra time shall start with a kick off from the team that started the match and the second period shall start with a kick off from the team that received the kick off. "Golden Points" will apply the first team to score any points wins, and the game finishes.

21.1.2 If after extra time there is still a draw then the team having scored the most tries during the Match will be declared the winner. If the Match is still drawn then the team that scored the first try will be declared the winner. If no tries were scored then the team with the higher positive points difference played between the two teams in the League shall be declared the winner. If the teams have the same differential, then the winner will be decided by way of a coin toss between captains.

22. REFEREES

22.1 A Referee shall be appointed for each Match by the HKRU Referee Manager

23. UNDER-AGE PLAYERS

23.1 No team may select or play in any adult Competition any Player under the age of 18 unless the following application process has been complied with: (and no Player aged under 17 or a front row Player aged under 18 in any circumstances)

23.1.1 The applicant Player has applied to the Union in writing using the application form provided by the Union and including with that application:

- (a) Endorsement from the chairman of the Club where the Player wishes to play adult rugby;
- (b) A letter from the applicant Player's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) supporting the application;
- (c) Reference from current coach or coach of the adult rugby team for whom the applicant wishes to play;

The form can be downloaded at the "Domestic Rugby - League Forms - Underage Players" section of Union website.

23.1.2 The application and recommendation should be submitted to the Union's Head of Rugby Operations and Head of Community & Development, who will inform the Union's Youth Committee of all applications. The Union reserves the right to make the final decision as to whether to allow the applicant to play adult rugby.

24. INTERPRETATION AND BREACH OF L&C RULES

24.1 The LFCP shall have absolute discretion on the interpretation or application of the L&C Rules, including determination of any breach of the L&C Rules, or any matter not provided for in the L&C Rules (including rectifying any administrative error) and shall give directions or make rulings as appropriate. The LFCP's decision shall be final and binding.

24.2 Any dispute or request for a determination relating to the interpretation or application of the L&C Rules shall be referred to the LFCP. Applications should be submitted in writing to the General Manager of Rugby Operations or his/her nominee addressed to the LFCP along with all supporting documentation. Where a determination is sought in advance of a particular fixture being played, the application must be submitted to the LFCP at least 72 hours before the relevant fixture. The LFCP's decision shall be final and binding.

24.3 Where there has been any omission or error in the L&C Rules the LFCP will have power to correct such error or omission in the manner they see fit.

24.4 Should a Club breach any of the L&C Rules, in addition to any express forfeiture provisions set out above, the relevant Club team that breached the L&C Rules may be deducted up to a further four League Competition points and/or the Club may receive a monetary fine, as the LFCP considers appropriate.