



HONG KONG RUGBY WOMEN'S LEAGUE AND COMPETITION RULES 2022/23

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) **Competition** means any rugby union Competition administered by the Union
- (iii) **Dual Registered Player** means a Non-Premiership Club Player who is dual registered with a Premiership Club and listed in a Premiership Squad
- (iv) **Effective Registration** means the Player has been registered by the Player's Club online in the Union's database for the relevant Season
- (v) **International Representative Player** means a player who has played rugby for the senior fifteen-a-side or next senior fifteen-a-side National Representative Teams or National Representative Sevens teams of a Union other than Hong Kong and falls within Regulation 8.2 of the World Rugby Rules.
- (vi) **L&C Rules** means these Women's Premiership, Championship and National League League and Competition Rules 2022/23
- (vii) **League** means the domestic XV's rugby competitions administered by the Union
- (viii) **League Competition** means a Competition within the League
- (ix) **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 seven members of the rugby community appointed by the Union each Season to represent a cross section of Clubs. The Union will nominate one of these members to perform the role of League Commissioner. Currently the LFCP members are:

Men's and Women's Premiership and Premiership A:

Peter Else (Chair)
Don Ryder
Kim Boreham

Men's and Women's Championship, National & Community Leagues:

John Bruce (Chair)
Wu Yuet-Ming
Paul Deayton
Rod Lai

- (x) **Match** means a rugby union Match administered by the Union
- (xi) **National League** shall mean any Competition within the League below the Premiership and Championship

- (xii) **National Player** means a player who is a member of the senior Hong Kong 15s or 7s team(s) during the 2022-23 season.
- (xiii) **Non-Premiership Club** means any Club that is not a Premiership Club
- (xiv) **Premiership Club** means USRC Tigers, Valley RFC, Gai Wu, Kowloon RFC, SCAA CWB, HKFC
- (xv) **Premiership Squad** means the squad of Players that each Premiership Club has registered with the Union and listed as its Premiership Squad
- (xvi) **Premiership League** means the highest League Competition within the League
- (xvii) **Player Transfer Form** means a form the Player must sign and have counter signed by the Player's current Club chair or Club coaching officer and new Club chair or Club coaching officer
- (xviii) **Player** means a Player playing a Match administered by the Union
- (xix) **Season** means the League season, which typically runs from September to March
- (xx) **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.
- (xxi) **Union** means the Hong Kong Rugby Union

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 20 September.

2.3 The entry procedures, format, divisions, sequence, timing and duration of the Competitions shall be determined by the Union.

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 **Dual Registration:** No Player may hold Effective Registration with more than one Club at any time unless approved by the LFCP, except for a Dual Registered Player. A Premiership Club may dual register up to 6 Players from a Non-Premiership Club with approval from the HKRU Head of Women's Performance Rugby. 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 for the Premiership Club in the Premiership League Competitions only throughout the Season without limitation. Dual Registered Players must be registered as such with the Union by 1 January 2023.

3.3 **Player Transfer:** A Player who wishes to transfer Clubs may do so between 1 April and 1 December 2022 by completing and submitting to the Union a Player Transfer Form signed by all relevant parties. 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 agree to the transfer.

3.4 New Players (currently not registered to any other Club) may be registered with a Club at any time up to 8th January 2023.

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

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

3.5.2 Has not obtained a Player Permit under the Player Permit System allowing the Player to play for the Club in the relevant Match; or

3.5.3 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 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. SQUAD REGISTRATION AND REQUIREMENTS

6.1 **Premiership Squad Registration:** Each Premiership Club must register a minimum of 25 Players with the Union as its Premiership Squad at least one week before the first Premiership League Match of the Season. Each Premiership Club must comply with the following:

6.1.1. Performance list

(i) Each Premiership Club must identify its top 12 performing players within its Premiership squad who will not be able to play down in the Championship or lower leagues (except as permitted in Rule 7 below)

(ii) The list of players identified by the Premiership Clubs under (i) above shall be referred to as the 'Performance List'. Each Premiership Club must submit its Performance List to be approved by the HKRU Senior Manager – Performance 1 week before the first Premiership Match of the Season.

6.1.2 A maximum of six (6) registered Premiership Squad Players, excluding those listed in the Performance List, may drop down to play in the Championship each week. Named Premiership Squad Players are not permitted to play any further down in the National League.

6.1.3 National Players cannot play down in the Championship unless granted special dispensation by the Senior Manager or General Manager of Performance.

6.1.4 International Representative Players cannot play down in the Championship.

6.1.5 Should a Premiership Club breach Rule 9, any forfeiture of League Competition points imposed by the LFCP in relation to the breach will apply to the Club team that played the Premiership Squad Player only. No additional forfeiture of League Competition points may be imposed in relation to the Premiership team.

6.1.6 **Trained Front Row Players:** Each Premiership Club must identify and register a minimum of 6 Trained Front Row Players within its Premiership Squad. It is the team's responsibility to ensure that all front row players and potential front row replacements are suitably trained.

6.1.7 **HKID Requirement**

(i) All Premiership Squad players must have a Hong Kong Identity Card. A Player on a visitor's visa is not eligible to play in the Premiership Squad or in the Premiership Competition.

(ii) Each Premiership Club must confirm that it has checked the Hong Kong Identity Cards of all Premiership Squad players and any other Player who plays for the Premiership Club in the Premiership League Competition.

6.1.8 **National Players:** All Senior National Players must be registered with a Premiership Squad.

6.1.9 **International Representative Players:** A Premiership Club may register a maximum of 2 capped International Players (with a 3rd player option at the discretion of the Senior Manager or General Manager of Performance) in its Premiership Squad. This also applies to the match day squad of 23.

6.1.10 **Changes to Premiership Squad**

(i) During the period from 18th December 2022 to 8th January 2023, a Premiership Club may make the following changes to its registered Premiership Squad for the purposes of Rule 6.1:

- De-register and replace up to a maximum of 3 Players within its Premiership Squad
- Change the Dual Registered Players named under Rules 3.2 and 8.

(ii) A request to replace a Player within the Premiership Squad may be made at any time up to 1st January 2023 based on medical grounds (long-term injury or pregnancy) or if the Player leaves Hong Kong on a long-term or permanent basis. The request will be referred to the LFCP and must be fully supported with relevant documentation. If replacement is approved, the replaced Player cannot play again at any lower level of the League in the same Season, without prior LFCP approval.

6.2 Championship Squad Registration: Each Championship Club must register a minimum of 23 Players with the Union as its Championship Squad at least one week before the first League Match of the Season. Each Championship Club must comply with the following:

6.2.1 A maximum of four (4) registered Championship Squad Players, with the exception of any International Representative Player/s, may drop down into and play in the National League each week.

6.2.3 Should a Championship Club breach Rule 9, 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.

6.2.4 **Trained Front Row Players:** Each Non-Premiership Club must identify and register a minimum of 4 Trained Front Row Players within its Championship Squad.

Each Premiership Club must identify and register a minimum of 3 Trained Front Row Players within its Championship Squad.

It is the team's responsibility to ensure that all front row players and potential front row replacements are suitably trained.

6.2.5 **International Representative Players:** A Championship Club may register 1 capped International Player (with a 2nd player option at the discretion of the Senior Manager or General Manager of Performance) in its Premiership Squad. This also applies to the match day squad of 23.

6.3 National League Squad Registration: Each National League Club must register a minimum of 17 Players with the Union as its National League squad at least one week before the first League Match of the Season.

6.3.1 **Trained Front Row Players:** Each National League Club must identify and register a minimum of 3 Trained Front Row Players within its National League Squad. It is the team's responsibility to ensure that all front row players and potential front row replacements are suitably trained.

6.3.2 **No National Players or International Representative Players:** No National Player or capped International Representative Player may be registered in a National League squad or play in a National League Match.

6.4 For any club or combined club with two teams in the same League a maximum of 4 players can play between the teams on any given week.

7. PLAYER PERMIT SYSTEM

7.1 Permits may be granted to allow Players to play in a named Competition for another Club.

7.2 A Permit is required to allow a Player to play for a Club, other than the Club for which the Player is registered, in any Match.

7.3 A Club may take no more than 6 Players on loan or permit at any one time provided that the Players are not National or International Representative Players.

7.4 No named Premiership or Championship Squad player is permitted to play in the National League for another Club.

7.5 The procedure for granting Player Permits will be:

(i) A permit is a letter of permission written by an Official of the Club with which the Player is registered. All permit requests will be acknowledged in writing by the Union.

(ii) A permit must be sought for each Match in which a Player plays by Wednesday 12pm weekly and such permit may be granted for a Match at any time in the season. Any permit issued must be agreed in writing (by fax, letter or email) by both the Club with which the Player is registered, and the Club with which she is to play on permit and lodged with the Head of Women's Rugby Development before the Match takes place.

(iii) The Union will confirm to the requesting Club whether the Permit has been granted.

8. DUAL REGISTRATIONS

8.1 A Premiership Club may register up to a maximum of 6 Players registered with Non-Premiership Clubs with prior agreement of the Player and her Club. These Players must be registered by name with the Union and be clearly identified as "Dual Registered Players" with the Premiership Club. A Dual Registered Player may only play in the Premiership Competition for the Premiership Club with whom she is registered. A Dual Registered Player may not play in the Championship or National League Competition for the Premiership Club.

8.2 Should a Premiership Club play a Player in breach of 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 Dual Registered Player only. No additional forfeiture of League Competition points may be imposed in relation to the Premiership team.

9. TEAM MANAGEMENT, REPLACEMENTS AND SUBSTITUTIONS

9.1 Women's Premiership

9.1.1 Teams will follow [World Rugby Passport - Law 3. Team](#) – Team: Numbers, Uncontested Scrum, Permanent Replacement, Permanent Replacement – Recognise and Remove, Temporary Replacement - Blood Injury, Temporary Replacement – All, Tactical Replacements Joining the Match

9.2 Championship League

9.2.1 Championship teams are permitted to play 'rolling substitutions' with unlimited interchanges. Substitutions may only take place when the ball is dead and with the referee's permission.

9.2.2 Any team that plays more than 23 Players in a Match (or 22 Players if the team commenced the Match with a match day squad of 22 Players) shall forfeit the Match and any League Competition points obtained in respect of the Match in which the Player played in breach.

9.2.3 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.

9.2.3 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.

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

9.3 National League

9.3.1 National League match day squads of 12-20 players – this must contain 3 Trained Front Row Players.

9.3.2 National League teams are permitted to play ‘rolling substitutions’ with unlimited interchanges. Substitutions may only take place when the ball is dead and with the referee’s permission.

9.3.3 National League will play 12 a side. Each team must have 6 forwards (Front Row, Second Row, No. 8) and 6 Backs in the playing area during play. The No.8 can pick and go from the scrum.

9.3.4 In the event of a National League team being unable to safely form a contestable scrum at the start of the match, the referee will order the game to be played with uncontested scrums. The team must inform the opposition team of this a minimum of 24 hours before kick-off as a courtesy. The game will continue without either team having to drop a player. Uncontested scrums as a result of sending off, temporary suspension or injury must be played with six players per side.

9.3.5 Any team that plays more than 20 Players in a Match shall forfeit the Match and any League Competition points obtained in respect of the Match in which the Player played in breach.

9.4 Grand Championship Eligibility

9.4.1 A Player must have played a minimum of 2 league matches for a Club during the 2022-23 season to be eligible to play in the Grand Championships for that Club.

9.4.2 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 Premiership level and 7 at Championship they cannot participate in the Championship League Grand Finals, unless they receive dispensation from LFCP.

Note: This rule does not apply to dual registered players as per Rule 8.

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

10. GAME DAY ADMINISTRATION

10.1 All teams that play are required to submit a completed team sheet of its match day squad via the GameDay system by midday prior to match day. Teams are required to identify and mark on the team sheets their Trained Front Row Players.

10.1.1 Premiership match day squads should name a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 23 players in line with 9.1.1.

10.1.2 Championship match day squads should name a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 23 players. A match day squad of 23 players must include a minimum 4 Trained Front Row Players. A match day squad of 22 and under must include a minimum of 3 Trained Front Row Players.

10.1.3 National League match day squads should name a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 20 players, including a minimum of 3 Trained Front Row Players.

10.1.4 All teams are required to submit a team results sheet on the Monday following a Saturday match. If the match is played on day other than a Saturday, then on the first working day following. Results sheets must clearly show the names of all players that participated, along with point scorers and the recipients of any yellow and/or red cards.

11. POSTPONEMENT OF MATCHES

Subject to Rule 12.1, a Club must fulfil its Competition fixture obligations in respect of any Match on the date and at the time appointed for such fixture.

11.1 MATCH ABANDONMENT

Apart from the wilful abandonment of a Match, if a Match is abandoned after its commencement under the provisions of the Laws of the Game, the following procedure applies:

- a) Where a Match has been abandoned at either half-time or any time in the second half, the result and any points and tries scored by each team in the match will stand
- b) Where a Match has been abandoned during the first half, the result shall be declared a draw
- c) Where a Match has been declared a draw, then for that Match, each Team will be awarded two Match points and any points and tries scored will count towards the total points and tries scored by each Team in all their pool matches

If a Team refuses to play or leaves the Match during play without authority of the Match Referee, that Team will be taken to have abandoned the Match. In these circumstances, that Team will be awarded no points and the opposing Team will receive the four points for a win (regardless of the score) and any bonus points to which it is entitled up to the time of abandonment.

11.2 EXPELLED TEAMS

If a Team is expelled from the Competition for whatever reason, then:

- a) That Team is deemed to have been awarded no competition points and to have scored no tries or points in Matches; and
- b) All Match results against such Team are deemed null and void. This means that all competition table points awarded in Matches against the expelled Team and tries and points scored or conceded in Matches against such Team will not be considered in determining standings in the competition table.

11.3 MATCH POSTPONED

Subject to the approval by the HKRU, a Match may be rearranged where both teams agree a Match should be postponed to another date.

If a Match is to be rearranged in accordance with L&C Rule 11.1 the fixture will be re-scheduled for a designated "make-up" weekend. In the event one or both 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 HKRU / LFCP in its absolute discretion.

11.4 MATCH CANCELLATION

If a Match is cancelled prior to Match Day, the HKRU Head of Rugby Operations may prepare a detailed report to the HKRU CEO and utilise the LFCP to decide, based on all facts, the outcome of the Match. If any future games are postponed, due to Force Majeure or factors outside of the control of HKRU and no alternative dates can be found to ensure the fixture is fulfilled, HKRU has agreed that both teams will be awarded two match points and the game will be deemed a 0-0 draw.

If a Match has begun but is then abandoned before half-time, the Union shall decide, in its absolute discretion, whether:

(a) the Match will be replayed in full, in which case:

(i) The Union shall select a date, kick-off time and venue for the replayed Match;

(ii) The procedure regarding any Citing Commissioner Warnings, Temporary Suspensions and red cards received in respect of the Match and/or any incidents in the Match that are the subject of citing or Misconduct complaints will be the same as if the Match had been completed; and

(iii) for the avoidance of doubt, a Club participating in a replayed Match may select a different team and/or squad from the team/squad it originally selected for the abandoned Match.

12. FAILURE TO HONOUR FIXTURES

12.1 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 16 and may be deducted up to a further four League Competition points and receive a monetary fine, as the LFCP considers appropriate.

13. EFFECT OF FORFEITURE OF 3 OR MORE MATCHES

13.1 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.

14. GENERAL COMPETITION RULES

14.1 Incomplete Season

Premiership and Championship

14.1.1 In the event that a league cannot be completed due to Force Majeure or factors outside of the control of HKRU, a league winner will only be considered if one full round robin of fixtures has been completed. Thereafter a league winner will be declared based on, league standings of the number of complete rounds played (for example if during Round 8 there is a Friday night match and on Saturday the league is shut down, this would be classed as an incomplete round and the Round 7 standings would be the final standings to declare a league winner).

National League

14.1.2 In the event that a league cannot be completed due to Force Majeure or factors outside of the control of HKRU, a league winner will only be considered if 50% of the fixtures have been completed by participating teams. For example, for a 10 round league all teams must have completed 5 rounds for a league winner to be considered. Thereafter a league winner will be declared based on league standings of the number of complete rounds played.

15. LEAGUE COMPETITION AND POINTS

15.1 Premiership teams will play three rounds within the Women's Premiership League.

Championship/ National League teams will play a round robin of ranking rounds. The league will then split into Championship/ National League A and Championship and National League B respectively. Teams finishing 1-5 will enter Championship/ National League A. Teams finishing 6-9 will enter Championship/ National League B.

Championship/National League A will play a further round robin (4 games)

Championship B will play a further 2 round robin (6 games)

National League teams will play two rounds within the Women's National League.

15.2 **Promotion and Relegation:** A Championship team finishing top two (1st or 2nd) in the League - that is a Non-Premiership Club - can contest for promotion into the Premiership the following season by:

- (i) winning a promotion/relegation match against the bottom placed team in the Premiership; and
- (ii) meeting the 'Premiership Minimum Standards Criteria' (See Premiership Minimum Standards Document)

If both 1st and 2nd placed Championship teams are Non-Premiership Clubs, the 1st / higher placed team will be given the opportunity to contest for promotion. They will have 72-hours following the completion of the final League fixture to confirm their involvement.

This promotion/relegation match will take place following the Grand Championship finals (at the end of the season).

The winner of that match will secure a place in the Premiership for the following season, providing it meets the 'Premiership Minimum Standards Criteria'.

The losing team will play in the Championship or equivalent league (2nd division) the following season.

15.3 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

15.4 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 based on 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.

16. MATCH FORFEITURES

16.1 In the event that a team forfeits a League Competition Match:

- (i) 5 League Competition points will be awarded to the team that receives the forfeiture
- (ii) 5 League Competition points will be deducted from the team that forfeits the Match
- (iii) The team receiving the forfeiture will receive 40 Match points for and nil Match points against
- (iv) The team forfeiting the Match will receive nil Match points for and 40 Match points against.

17. DURATION OF MATCHES

17.1 Premiership - 40 minutes x 2 with 5-minute interval

17.2 Stoppage time including interval, water breaks and injury time shall be determined by the match referee.

17.3 Championship - 40 minutes (running clock) x 2 with 5-minute interval

17.4 National League - 20 minutes (running clock) x 2 with 3-minute interval

17.5 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 a forfeiture should they wish to do so.

18. GRAND CHAMPIONSHIP RULES

18.1 Premiership: The four top placed teams in the Premiership League Competition will play in a Semi-Final and a Final to determine the winner of the Premiership Grand Championships.

Premiership Semi Final 1: 1st Vs 4th

Premiership Semi Final 2: 2nd Vs 3rd

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

The higher ranked teams will enjoy home advantage where feasible. The Finals will take place at King's Park.

18.2 Championship: Only the top 4 finishing teams in Championship A will participate in the Grand Championships. The 4 teams will play a Semi-Final, leading into a Final to determine the winner of the Championship Grand Finals.

Championship Semi Final 1: 1 v 4

Championship Semi Final 2: 2 v 3

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

The higher ranked teams will enjoy home advantage where feasible.

19. DRAWN MATCHES

19.1 If there is a draw in any knockout competition:

19.1.1 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.

19.1.2 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.

20. REFEREES

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

21. UNDER-AGE PLAYERS

21.1 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):

21.1.1 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 Chairperson 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) A letter from current coach or coach of the adult rugby team for whom the applicant wishes to play clearly stating how the player's safety and welfare will be taken into consideration.; the form can be downloaded at the "Domestic Rugby - League Forms - Underage Players" section of Union website.

21.1.2 The application and recommendation should be submitted to the Union's Head of Rugby Operations. The Union reserves the right to make the final decision as to whether to allow the applicant to play adult rugby.

21.1.3 The maximum game time for U18 players should not exceed 90 minutes in a 48-hour period.

22. INTERPRETATION AND BREACH OF L&C RULES

22.1 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.

22.2 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 Head of Rugby Operations or their 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.

22.3 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.

22.4 Should a Premiership or Non-Premiership 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.