

9. THE ALL IRELAND LEAGUE AND BATEMAN CUP 2016/17

9.1 General:

9.1.1 Regulation 9 (“this regulation”) inter alia governs the All Ireland League and Bateman Cup for Season 2016/17.

9.1.2 Each participating Club has indicated, by written acceptance, its wish to compete in the All Ireland League and Bateman Cup and, thereby, to adhere to and be bound by, this and any other regulations which govern the competitions (including for the avoidance of doubt the All Ireland League Participation Criteria and the Player Points System, attached hereto as appendix 1).

9.2 Governing Provisions, Interpretation and Definitions:

9.2.1 The competition shall be called the All Ireland League and Bateman Cup, hereafter for the purposes of this regulation referred to as “the League and Cup”.

9.2.2 Defined terms in this regulation shall have the same meanings as in the laws and regulations of the Union except where the context otherwise requires.

9.3 Administration and Management of the League and Cup

9.3.1 The Union shall appoint a League Sub Committee (“The League Sub Committee”), comprising a Chairman, a representative from each of the four Branches of the Union, a representative of the Women’s Committee and the Rugby Administration Manager appointed by the Union.

9.3.2 The League Sub Committee may co-opt a person(s) to assist in the management and administration of the League and Cup.

9.3.3 The League Sub Committee shall administer and manage the League and Cup.

9.4 Powers of the League Sub Committee

9.4.1 The League Sub Committee shall: -

- (i) Have power to make decisions regarding the administration and management of the League and Cup;
- (ii) Have power to hear complaints as provided for in this regulation and to impose such sanctions as may be permitted by these regulations;
- (iii) Be entitled, at its discretion, to delegate to the Rugby Administration Manager (or in his absence such other person as may be nominated by the Union) or such one or more members of the League Sub Committee as it may determine, such of its functions as it may decide.

Any decision of such person or persons so delegated shall be as valid and effective as if made by the League Sub Committee.

9.4.2 Where the functions of the League Sub Committee are delegated to the Rugby Administration Manager he may at his absolute discretion:

- (i) Make decisions himself;
- (ii) Refer the matter to the Chairman of the League Sub Committee to make the decision; or
- (iii) Refer the matter to the League Sub Committee (of which he is a member) to make the decision.

9.4.3 Decisions of the League Sub Committee shall be communicated to such Club(s) as may be directly affected as soon as reasonably practicable.

9.4.4 The Union or the League Sub Committee shall have no liability to any Club or person arising from any negligence or failure by the Union or the League Sub Committee to ensure compliance with this regulation or in relation to any other failure in the administration or management of the League.

9.5 **Complaints**

9.5.1 A Club or the Rugby Administration Manager may make a complaint in relation to an alleged breach of this regulation by any Club or in relation to any matter arising out of the administration or management of the League and Cup, which complaint shall be in writing and shall be received by the Union not later than fourteen days from midnight on the date of the event giving rise to the complaint.

9.5.2 A Club may only make a complaint in relation to a matter that affects it directly and which causes it to suffer a disadvantage in the League and Cup or some other material form of prejudice.

9.5.3 Time shall be regarded as being of the essence in relation to the enforcement of the time limit under regulation 9.5.1.

9.5.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the fourteen day time period runs from the date of the actual event and not from the date of the Club becoming aware of the event giving rise to the complaint.

9.5.5 All complaints shall be in writing and signed by the Rugby Administration Manager or the Secretary of the Club, as applicable, and state the grounds of the complaint.

9.5.6 All complaints by Clubs in relation to this regulation shall be accompanied by a payment of €500.

9.5.7 The onus of proof shall be on the Club or Rugby Administration Manager making the complaint to establish the breach or infringement of this regulation. The standard of proof shall be on the balance of probability.

9.5.8 The Union shall cause a copy of any valid complaint to be sent to any Club, or person directly affected as soon as is practicable after it has received the complaint.

9.6 **Adjudication of Complaints**

- 9.6.1 The Chairman of the League Sub Committee shall be entitled to determine any pre-adjudication procedural or evidential issues or disputes, including whether or not to hold a hearing, without recourse to the other members of the League Sub Committee.
- 9.6.2 The Chairman of the League Sub Committee shall:
- (i) Adjudicate on the matter himself as Chairman or,
 - (ii) Have the matter adjudicated on by the League Sub Committee (on which he shall act as Chairman and have a casting vote).
- 9.6.3 Where a hearing is being held, the persons referred to in Regulation 9.6.2 shall be referred to as the “Hearing Committee” for the purposes of this Regulation 9.6 and shall adjudicate upon the complaint in accordance with the following procedures:
- (i) The Chairman shall arrange for a hearing of such complaint with all convenient speed at such time and place as he may determine provided that any Club or person directly affected shall be given reasonable notice either in writing or orally to be confirmed in writing, of the time and place of such hearing.
 - (ii) No person may be a member of the Hearing Committee who has made, or acted on any committee that has made, a decision that is the subject matter of the complaint or who is, or is a member of a Club that is, directly affected by the complaint.
 - (iii) A Club or person appearing at a hearing before the Hearing Committee shall be entitled to be represented by not more than two persons (one of whom may be a legal representative provided that legal representation at the hearing shall not be permitted unless reasonable prior notice of such legal representation shall be given to the Hearing Committee and any Club or person directly affected by the complaint).
 - (iv) The Hearing Committee shall permit any Club or person directly affected by a complaint to submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations at the hearing.
 - (v) Subject to the requirements of natural justice the procedures to be adopted at the hearing shall be entirely at the discretion of the Hearing Committee. The Hearing Committee shall be entitled to seek such advice as it may require, including specialist or legal advice. The costs of same shall be the costs of the proceedings.
 - (vi) The Hearing Committee shall also be entitled to require a Club to submit, in advance, written submissions to the Hearing Committee, which shall set out the points and submissions that the Club will be seeking to rely on at the hearing. Any such submissions may at the discretion of the Hearing Committee be distributed to the other Club(s) participating at the hearing.
 - (vii) The decision of the Hearing Committee shall be notified to all parties directly affected as soon as reasonably practicable and where appropriate confirmed in writing.

- (viii) All hearings shall be held in private, unless otherwise ordered by the Hearing Committee.
- (ix) The Hearing Committee shall be entitled, where the circumstances warrant, to adjourn or postpone a hearing as it thinks fit.

9.7 **Provision of Information**

Where the League Sub Committee, the Chairman of the League Sub Committee or the Committee of Appeal requests a Club or person to provide information in relation to any matter, a reasonable time limit may be imposed and notified for the provision of such information and in the event that such time limit is not complied with, the League Sub Committee or the Chairman of the League Sub Committee or the Committee of Appeal (as may be appropriate) may deal with the matter in the absence of such information.

9.8 **Appeals**

- 9.8.1 An appeal shall lie from any decision of the League Sub Committee to the Committee of Appeal pursuant to Regulation 5.
- 9.8.2 Where a decision is made pursuant to this regulation by the League Sub Committee which affects the League or Cup position of any Club, it shall not be permissible for any Club which was not involved in or did not participate in the match in respect of which the decision was made, to lodge an appeal against any such decision.

9.9 **Sanctions**

- 9.9.1 The League Sub Committee shall be entitled in its absolute discretion to impose all or any of the following sanctions or penalties on an offending Club:
 - (i) A caution, a warning as to future conduct, or a reprimand;
 - (ii) A fine;
 - (iii) The requirement to replay a match at such time and at such venue as is thought fit;
 - (iv) The forfeiture of, and/or the granting to another club or clubs, of the competition points for a match which may include a bonus point;
 - (v) The deduction of competition points;
 - (vi) The suspension or expulsion of the Branch, Club, player or person for such period as may be deemed appropriate;
 - (vii) Such other penalty or sanction as may be deemed appropriate;
 - (viii) Make a payment of costs.

9.10 **Structure of League and Cup**

- 9.10.1 There shall be Two Divisions of the League.

9.10.2 Division 1 shall be split into two sections, each of 10 teams, known as 1A and 1B.

Division 2 shall be split into three sections, each of 10 teams, known as 2A, 2B and 2C.

9.10.3 The position of a Club in a division shall be established by awarding four League points for a win and two League points for a draw.

9.10.4 One bonus point shall be awarded to a Club scoring four or more tries in a match and one bonus point shall be awarded to a Club losing by 7 points or less.

9.10.5 In the event of Clubs at the top or bottom of a division being equal in League points gained, winning a division or section, promotion and relegation shall be decided on the basis of match points scored, the Club or Clubs at the top with the larger differences between “points for” and “points against” winning the division or gaining promotion, and the Club or Clubs at the bottom having the larger difference between “points against” and “points for” being relegated. In the event of two or more Clubs having the same number of League points and the same match points difference, then the Club or Clubs scoring the larger number of wins shall be preferred followed by the most draws and then the most tries. Thereafter, if two or more clubs are still tied, then the club that earned the most league points in the matches between the clubs shall be preferred. Then, and only then, if there is no difference, shall play-offs be arranged. Any position in the final League standings is determined by the same criteria as for promotion and relegation.

9.10.6 The Cup shall comprise of the 4 Provincial Senior Cup Holders with the semi-finals being an open draw.

9.11 Promotion and Relegation at the end of the season

9.11.1 In Division 1A the top four clubs shall qualify for play-offs to determine the League Championship as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document. The bottom club shall be relegated and the 2nd last club shall enter a Play-Off with the clubs placed 2-4 in Division 1B as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document.

9.11.2 In Division 1B the top club shall be promoted and the clubs placed 2-4 shall Play-off along with the 9th placed club in Division 1A for the final place in Division 1A as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document. The bottom club shall be relegated and the 2nd last club shall enter a Play-Off with the clubs placed 2 -4 in Division 2A as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document.

9.11.3 In Division 2A the top club shall be promoted and clubs placed 2-4 shall Play-off along with the 9th placed club in Division 1B for the final place in Division 1B as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document The bottom club shall be relegated and the 2nd last club shall enter a Play-Off with the clubs placed

2-4 in Division 2B as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document. Nationally or Provincially contracted players may not play in these Play-Offs.

9.11.4 In Division 2B the top club shall be promoted and the clubs placed 2-4 shall Play-off along with the 9th placed club in Division 2A for the final place in Division 2A as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document. The bottom club shall be relegated and the 2nd last club shall enter a Play-Off with the clubs placed 2-4 in Division 2C as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document.

9.11.5 In Division 2C the top club shall be promoted and the clubs placed 2-4 shall Play-off along with the 9th placed club in Division 2B for the final place in Division 2B as per the Play-Off arrangements at the back of this document. The bottom club shall be relegated and the 2nd last club shall play off against the runner up in the All Ireland Provincial League Championship.

9.11.6 The four Provincial Qualifying League winners shall qualify to play in the All Ireland Provincial League Championship provided they meet the AIL Participation Criteria. The winner shall be promoted to Division 2C. Eligibility for this Championship shall be similar to the Qualifying League eligibility in the respective provinces

9.11.7 Where play-offs take place the venue shall be that of the higher ranked team.

9.12 **League Fixtures**

9.12.1 Matches shall be played on dates decided by the League Sub Committee with the approval of the Committee of the Union

9.12.2 The League Sub Committee shall arrange the fixture list for each season. Matches shall normally be played on Saturdays but the League Sub Committee shall have full power to arrange matches on other days and to alter previously fixed dates and venues should circumstances arise to warrant such alteration.

9.12.3 Matches shall kick off at 2.30pm (unless otherwise determined by the AIL Sub Committee) with the exception of those fixed for weekday nights which shall kick off at 7.30pm. However, if for special reasons two Clubs mutually agree to an alternative date or kick off time, both Clubs must apply in writing to the League Sub Committee at least 7 days prior to the date of the match in question and obtain consent in writing from the League Sub Committee prior to the match.

9.12.4 Clubs shall play in their respective Divisions on a Home and Away basis;

9.13 **Postponements, Re-Arrangements, Fitness of Ground**

9.13.1 Only in very exceptional circumstances shall a League or Cup match be postponed and then only with the approval of the League Sub Committee or its nominee. When a League match is postponed or abandoned, unless there has been a failure to fulfil a fixture, it shall be played or replayed later in the season at the earliest available date, such date to be decided by the League Sub Committee or its nominee. When a Cup match is postponed twice the venue will be reversed for that round.

9.13.2 The League Sub Committee shall provide a list of nominated persons to act on the

Ground Fitness Panel, as set out in the regulations, who shall be available for consultation when the fitness of a ground is to be considered. A Club which has doubt about the fitness of its ground shall contact the Ground Fitness Panel nominee of the League Sub Committee. This nominee shall discuss the situation with the Club and if necessary visit and inspect the ground. Where there is doubt about the fitness of a ground and there is a reasonable prospect that with improved weather conditions the ground could be playable by kick off time, a decision on whether or not the pitch is playable shall be postponed until close to the kick off time. Matches may not be postponed on grounds that the safety of the players might be prejudiced unless with the additional approval of the match referee.

- 9.13.3 The determination of the fitness of the ground shall be the responsibility of the member of the Ground Fitness Panel, whose decision shall be final. In the event of the appropriate member of the Ground Fitness Panel not being available on any occasion the League Sub Committee may nominate another person to act on the Ground Fitness panel.
- 9.13.4 If the home ground in question is Lansdowne Road, the nominee of the League Sub Committee shall be the person or persons who normally make such decisions on behalf of the IRFU. A similar procedure shall be followed at Branch grounds.
- 9.13.5 In the event of a match having to be postponed, it shall be the responsibility of the home Club to inform (a) their opponents, (b) the referee and his assistants (c) the Union and Branch, as soon as possible. Failure to do so may result in the home Club being liable for all or part of the expenses of their opponents and match officials.
- 9.13.6 Subject to the provisions of regulation 9.13.2 above where doubt exists as to the fitness of a ground, the home Club must endeavour to find an alternative venue and shall make early contact with the visiting Club as to its travel arrangements etc., in order that contact can be made prior to a Club commencing its journey.
- 9.13.7 Where it is known at least seven days prior to a League or Cup match that a pitch is unlikely to be playable, the home Club must find a suitable alternative venue and advise same.

9.14 Player Registration and Eligibility

9.14.1 Registration of Eligible Players

- 9.14.1.1 On or before 1st June in any year, each Club playing in the League and Cup shall submit to the Union a list of its eligible playing members who are registered with the appropriate Branch, complete with registration numbers. A person shall be registered as a playing member with one Club only.
- 9.14.1.2 This list may be amended up to 1st October to add:
 - (i) Players entering adult rugby having attained the age of 18 years
 - (ii) Players enrolling in Universities and joining University Clubs

- (iii) Players leaving a European University / College at the completion of their course of studies
- (iv) Players transferring from one Club to another Club with the written consent of the former Club provided they have not already played for a club in the AIL that season.
- (v) Players transferring from another union who have played rugby for Ireland or the Exiles at any level.
- (vi) Players whose primary place of residence is Ireland and who travel abroad for a period of not more than 12 months provided they return to Ireland before 1st October of a given season.

9.14.1.3 Any player who is registered as a club member prior to 1st October and who attains the age of 18 during the season shall be eligible to play after he has attained his 18th birthday save schoolboys who are eligible for the relevant provincial schools competition.

9.14.2 **Eligibility of players**

9.14.2.1 The following are the registered players who are eligible to play in the All Ireland League and Cup:

- (i) A Player who qualifies to play for Ireland under World Rugby Regulations. This includes players who have completed three years residency.
- (ii) A player who holds a passport issued by a country which is a member of the E.U.
- (iii) Where a player from a non-EU country comes to Ireland on a minimum one year Work Permit for a bona-fide job he may, after completing a minimum of 12 months in this country, apply to be considered as a 'Non-Overseas' player.

9.14.2.2 In the above cases, players must both be resident in Ireland on 1st June and remain in residence until the commencement of the League.

9.14.2.3 For the purposes of this regulation residency is defined as "Permanent place of residence".

9.14.2.4 Exceptions

In any season each Club may register one player who does not satisfy the above criteria provided that he has taken up and remains in residence and has been properly registered prior to the 1st October. For the purposes of interpretation, this player is classified as an overseas player and shall be nominated as such to the Rugby Administration Manager.

9.14.3 Notwithstanding the provisions of this regulation 9.14, any player or Club shall be

entitled in writing to submit to the Union any special circumstances he or it considers relevant to registration and/or eligibility. The submission shall be considered by the Chairman of the League Sub Committee who shall in appropriate cases be entitled in his absolute discretion to accept the registration and/or eligibility of such player provided the submission is made before 1st October.

9.14.4 In exceptional circumstances the Chairman of the League Sub Committee may in his absolute discretion, on application in writing by the player supported by the consent in writing of both Clubs, agree to the player changing Clubs notwithstanding that the League has started and that the player has already played in the competition subject to such application being presented or submitted prior to the 1st January of any given season after the commencement of the competition.

9.14.5 Subject to compliance with the provisions of this regulation 9.14, clubs in Division 1A and 1B may select a maximum of Four Provincially Contracted Players (excluding Development and Academy players) in its panel of players for an All Ireland League or Cup match, only Two of whom may be a forward. To be eligible for a Club's final four matches in the regular season of the League competition those selected Contracted Players shall have started and played a minimum of the first half of three All Ireland League matches in the preceding weeks. To be eligible for the League play-off matches between clubs in Division 1A and 1B those selected Contracted Players shall have started and played a minimum of the first half of four All Ireland League matches during that season. Provincially Contracted Players are not permitted to play in the League play-off matches between clubs in Division 1B and 2A.

IRFU Nationally Contracted Players may only play in rounds 1 to 14 of Division 1A and 1B of the League in exceptional circumstances and then only with the approval of the League Sub Committee.

In the event of an IRFU Nationally Contracted Player being granted permission to play in a League or Cup match then only three Provincially Contracted Player may play for that club.

IRFU Foreign Contracted Players may not play in the All Ireland League.

Development and Academy contracted players may play in the League and Cup without restriction.

Nationally or Provincially contracted players may not play in the Bateman Cup if a Division 1 club is drawn against a Division 2 club.

The release of any Contracted Players is at the discretion of each Branch Provincial Director of Coaching.

This regulation is subject to an 'exceptional circumstances' application by a Province / Club to the League Sub Committee for its determination, subject to a maximum approval of one contracted player per club, for a player returning from

a protracted injury.

9.15 **Dual Status Players**

9.15.1 The term “dual status” refers to a player who although a bona fide registered playing member of a non League Club in Ireland may play for a Club in the League and/or Cup provided the following regulations are observed. A League Club shall be limited to selecting or playing not more than three such players in one season and each player may make a maximum of 6 appearances in a match day squad during a season. Selection shall include players who are selected as replacements / substitutes for League and or Cup matches.

9.15.2 A League Club wishing to use the dual status principle shall follow the procedures set out below.

9.15.2.1 A request shall be made to the Secretary of the Non-League Club on a match by match basis. When permission is obtained, an application shall be made in writing to the IRFU Rugby Administration Manager, outlining in detail the exceptional circumstances that has led to the request for the use of a Dual Status player, at least forty eight hours prior to the match, enclosing the written permission of the non-League Club. Acceptance as a Dual Status player shall not in any way impact the players’ status or eligibility to play for the non-league club.

9.15.2.2 The name of each Dual Status player and the letter of release from the Junior Club shall also be sent to the relevant Branch office.

9.15.2.3 The name/s of dual status player/s shall be indicated on the League or Cup team sheet (D/S).

9.15.2.4 Dual status players shall not play in the Play-Off match between the winner of the All Ireland Provincial League Championship and the club finishing second bottom in Division 2C.

9.15.2.5 In Play-Off matches between AIL clubs a player shall have made a minimum of 4 appearances as a Dual Status player to be eligible to play in a Play-Off match.

9.15.3 Dual status players shall satisfy regulation 9.14 relating to player eligibility. An overseas player, as defined in regulation 9.14.2.4, may not play as a dual status player for a Club which has already registered an overseas player for that season.

9.15.4 A player shall only be a dual status member of one AIL Club in the same season. Any player who transfers to a Junior Club in the same season may only play as a Dual Status Player for the club from whom he transferred for the remainder of that season.

9.16 **Referees and Touch Judges**

9.16.1 Referees for League and Cup matches shall be appointed by the Union’s Referee Committee in conjunction with the Provincial Branches’ Referees’ Society/Associations.

- 9.16.2 Two touch judges shall be appointed for each League and Cup match by the Referees Society/Association of the province in which the League or Cup match is due to be played. One of the touch judges shall have been nominated as senior touch judge. In League and Cup matches Law 6.B.6 of the Laws of the Game regarding "flagging" by touch judges, shall apply.
- 9.16.3 In the event of the referee failing to turn up for a League or Cup match or being unable to continue to referee a match, the senior touch judge shall replace the referee and the home Club shall appoint a suitable replacement touch judge, who should in any event be there to act as 4th official. In the event of this happening "flagging" by touch judges shall cease to operate.
- 9.16.4 The referee after each match shall send to the Rugby Administration Manager the detailed result of the match and the team lists for both Clubs. The name or names of players or replacements deemed to be "dual status" players shall be indicated as such on the team list.
- 9.16.5 Under Law 10 of the Laws of the Game the referee may caution an offending player that he will be sent off if he repeats the offence. This he will signify by producing a yellow card. Any complaint to a yellow card shall be notified by the player to the Rugby Administration Manager within one week of the date such yellow card was issued. If a player receives three yellow cards for foul play over a number of League and Cup matches in any given season he shall be required to attend a meeting of the I.R.F.U. Disciplinary Committee at which he may receive a suspension.

9.17 Players Sent Off the Field of Play or Cited

Players sent off or cautioned under Regulation 9.16.5 above or cited in League or Cup matches shall be dealt with under the Union's Reg. 5.

9.18 Conduct and Responsibility

9.18.1 Clubs participating in the League and Cup are responsible and accountable for the conduct of their players, officials, members and supporters in attendance at League and Cup matches.

9.18.2 Clubs, players, officials and members shall ensure that;

9.18.2.1 MATCHES ARE PLAYED IN ACCORDANCE WITH DISCIPLINED AND SPORTING BEHAVIOUR

9.18.2.2 NONE OF THE PERSONS REFERRED TO IN 9.18.1 ENGAGE IN AN ACT OR ACTS OF MISCONDUCT

For the purposes of the League and Cup misconduct shall mean conduct, behaviour or practices on or off the playing enclosure which may bring the game of rugby or the Union into disrepute or may be detrimental to the best interests of the Union or of the game in accordance with Regulation 5.

9.18.3 Breaches of Regulation 9.18.1 and 9.18.2 shall be dealt with under the Union's Regulation 5.

9.18.4 For the avoidance of doubt a Club or player may be sanctioned for misconduct even if a referee has already penalised one or more of its players for his or their conduct during a match.

9.18.5 Each participating Club shall be represented by registered members of the Club who are eligible pursuant to these regulations. Each Club shall play at full available strength in all matches unless some satisfactory reason is given.

9.18.6 No player may participate in the League or Cup while serving a disciplinary sanction imposed by the Union, by a Branch of the Union or by his Club.

9.19 **Medical Provisions**

It is the responsibility of the home club to have a medical officer and qualified first-aid persons in attendance at matches. It is recommended that an ambulance should also be in attendance at all matches and clubs should ensure reasonable access at all times.

9.20 **League Sponsor's Logo**

Clubs participating in the League are responsible to ensure that the League Sponsor's Logo is worn on the right sleeve of the Club jersey when participating in any League match save and except where circumstances have arisen which precludes same, such circumstances to be approved by the All Ireland League Committee.

9.21 **Replacements and Substitutes**

Clubs must tog out five additional players, who may act as substitutes or replacements, subject to Law 3 of the Laws of the Game. A team shall have five players who can play in front row positions, two of whom can play hooker and three of whom can play prop. For Semi-Finals and Finals of the League and Cup the number of additional players may be up to seven.

For guidance, the following table indicates the numbers of suitably trained and experienced players for the front row when nominating different numbers of players:

| Number of Players | Number of suitably trained & experienced players |
|-------------------|--|
| 15 or less | 3 players who can play in the front row |
| 16, 17 or 18 | 4 players who can play in the front row |
| 19, 20, 21 or 22 | 5 players who can play in the front row |

- Scrums will become uncontested if either team cannot field a suitably trained front row or if the referee so orders.

- A front row player whose departure has caused uncontested scrums **cannot be replaced**.

Rolling substitutions shall be permitted in the League and Cup. Clubs shall be furnished with these regulations prior to the commencement of each season.

9.22 **Clash of Colours**

In the event of a clash of colours, of which the referee is the sole judge, it shall be the responsibility of the Home Club to change into a playing strip which is significantly different in colours from the normal playing strip, such strip to have been declared to and approved by the League Sub Committee or its nominee before 1st September of any given season.

9.23 **Team Sheets and List**

Prior to the kick off, each Club shall be required to submit to the referee and the opponent Club its list of starting players and replacements / substitutes, correctly numbered. This list shall include each player's registration number and shall be an electronic team sheet, directions on which shall be forwarded to clubs prior to the commencement of the league. A player shall wear the jersey whose number corresponds to his number on the team list. The name/s of dual status players and/or replacements / substitutes and players who can play in the front row positions shall be indicated by a P or H as appropriate for Prop and Hooker. Failure to comply with this regulation may be the subject of a complaint by the opposing team, or the League Sub Committee and shall be dealt with accordingly.

The Away team in a League or Cup fixture shall ensure to forward its nominated Team and Replacements, numbered 1-20, to the Host Club by 12 noon on the Thursday preceding the match (or 12 noon Friday for a Sunday match).

9.24 **Playing Enclosure and Technical Zones**

9.24.1 The playing enclosure shall be defined preferably by a fence, if not by ropes.

9.24.2 If there is a stand, seats shall be made available for replacements. Two technical Zones shall be designated, both on the same side of the pitch, clearly marked in white paint, each nine metres long and three metres wide and not less than two metres from the touchline, one on either side of the halfway line, in which benches shall be placed and a zone shall be allocated to each team. The attendants and replacements shall remain seated within their zone. The referee has the authority to order them out of the playing enclosure if they fail to adhere to this requirement.

9.24.3 Ball boys and a limited number of press photographers may also be permitted inside the enclosure.

9.24.4 Prior to kick-off both sets of replacements must be introduced and identified to the 4th Official. In the event that a club has more than 5 replacements toggled out for the pre-match warm-up, those that are not in the match-day squad are not permitted to have any contact with the Technical Zone Area without the express

permission of the 4th Official.

Replacements and substitutes shall enter the field of play from the technical zones and be introduced by the replacement touch-judge.

9.24.5 Each team shall nominate to the referee its medical officer, team attendant / physiotherapist and coach. A maximum of three people are permitted in the technical zone in addition to the nominated replacements. The coach cannot act as team attendant who is the only person permitted on the field during the match, and only to attend to an injured player with the exception of 9.23.6 below. Players requiring water or drinks shall come to the touch line.

9.24.6 Each team shall nominate its medical officer who is permitted to attend an injured player when required.

9.24.7 Coaches are precluded from entering the playing enclosure (excluding the technical zone) during the course of a match except at half time when the coach may come on to the field to speak to his team.

9.24.8 Kicking tees may be used by individual kickers.

9.24.9 The home club shall supply touch judge flags.

9.25 **Match Balls**

The 'Gilbert Barbarian' ball shall be the official match ball to be used in All Ireland League & Cup matches.

9.26 **Finance**

9.26.1 The Union shall provide financial assistance to Clubs participating in the League and Cup. The amount of such financial assistance shall be determined annually by the Union at its sole discretion.

9.26.2 Gate receipts shall belong to the home Club.

9.26.3 The away Club shall be responsible for its own travel and accommodation arrangements and expenses.

9.26.4 The home Club shall be responsible for all match expenses.

9.27 **Trophies**

9.27.1 Division 1A and 1B winners: Trophy and 25 medals.

9.27.2 Division 2A, 2B and 2C winners: Trophy and 25 medals.

9.27.3 All Ireland Provincial League Championship winners: Union Plaque and 25 medals

9.28 **Applicable Law**

These regulations shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the Laws of the Republic of Ireland.

9.29 **Unforeseen Circumstances**

9.29.1 The League Sub Committee shall be entitled to make decisions on all matters not provided for in these regulations.

9.29.2 No proceedings pursuant to these regulations shall be quashed or held invalid by reason only of any defect, irregularity, omission or other technicality, provided there has been no miscarriage of justice.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PLAY-OFFS

(1) Division 1A Top Four

W/E 22nd April 2017 Semi-Finals Club placed 1st v Club placed 4th
Club Placed 2nd v Club placed 3rd

- (i) If clubs are tied at full time, extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played.
- (ii) If still tied, the Club who has scored most tries shall be the winner
- (iii) If still tied, the team who scored the 1st try shall be the winner.
- (iv) If no tries have been scored, the team that scored the first points in the match shall be the winner.
- (v) If still tied, the club who finished in the higher position in the League shall be the winner.

Final - Sunday 7th May 2017

In the event of the Final being tied after extra time, the match shall be replayed.

In a replayed fixture, (i) to (v) above shall apply.

(2) Division 1B Promotion Play-Offs - 22nd April 2017

Div 1A club placed 9th v Div 1B club placed 4th

Div 1B club placed 2nd v Div 1B club placed 3rd

Final - 29th April 2017

(3) Division 2A Promotion Play-Offs - 22nd April 2017

Div 1B club placed 9th v Div 2A club placed 4th

Div 2A club placed 2nd v Div 2A club placed 3rd

Final - 29th April 2017

(4) Division 2B Promotion Play-Offs - 22nd April 2017

Div 2A club placed 9th v Div 2B club placed 4th

Div 2B club placed 2nd v Div 2B club placed 3rd

Final - 29th April 2017

(5) Division 2C Promotion Play-Offs - 22nd April 2017

Div 2B club placed 9th v Div 2C club placed 4th

Div 2C club placed 2nd v Div 2C club placed 3rd

Final - 29th April 2017

- (i) If clubs are tied at full time, extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played.
- (ii) If still tied, the Club who has scored most tries shall be the winner
- (iii) If still tied, the team who scored the 1st try shall be the winner.
- (iv) If no tries have been scored, the team that scored the first points in the match shall be the winner.
- (v) If still tied, the club who finished in the higher position in the League shall be the winner.

ALL IRELAND PROVINCIAL LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP

| | | |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| 1 st April | Munster v Connacht | Ulster v Leinster |
| 8 th April | Connacht v Ulster | Leinster v Munster |
| 22 nd April | Connacht v Leinster | Ulster v Munster |
| 29 th April | Playoff | |

In this Championship, the points scoring system shall be as in the All Ireland League.

The winner shall be promoted to Division 2C

The second placed team in this Championship shall pay off against the team finishing second bottom in Division 2C. This match will be played at the Division 2C club.

All Ireland Bateman Cup

The draw for the All Ireland Bateman Cup is as follows:

Semi-Finals - 21st/22nd January 2017

Leinster v Ulster

Munster v Connacht

- (i) If clubs are tied at full time, extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played.

- (ii) If still tied, the club which has scored most tries shall be the winner.
- (iii) If still tied, the away team shall be declared the winner.

Cup Final - 29th April 2017

If after (i) and (ii) above the teams are still level

- iv. The team who scored the 1st try shall be the winner
- v. If no tries have been scored, the team that scored the first points in the final shall be declared the winner
- vi. If the final is scoreless, penalty kicks shall be taken to decide the winner.

All Ireland Junior Cup

The dates for each round of the All Ireland Junior Cup shall be:

29th October 2016
12th November 2016
10th December 2016 and
28th January 2017

The Regulations set out above in respect of the Senior Cup shall apply to the Junior Cup.

Appendix 1 Player Points System

1. Definitions used in the PPS

- **‘Home Club’:** the club with which a player commenced playing at Mini/youth level. A player may leave the club to attend a school or 3rd Level Club, but must return directly to their original club following secondary school and/or college to retain their point status of one (1). *Note: this status is retained even if the player achieves National and/or Provincial U18/19 representation and remains with the home club.*
- **‘Profile Player’:** a player who has been named on a National and/or Interprovincial U18/19 match day squad (i.e. named on the Team Sheet).
- **Dual-Status Player:** a ‘positional specific’ player who is registered with a Junior Club, and with the prior permission of the Ulster Bank League Committee participates in the UBL on a match by match basis
- **Club:** No differentiation between senior or junior clubs occurs within the PPS. Taking into consideration the player panel analysis, the PPS will apply equally across all clubs (including 3rd Level Clubs)

2. Implementation of the PPS

- The PPS only applies to the Ulster Bank League.
- For the 2016/17 season the combined value of the UBL Squad must not exceed 100 points (i.e. sum of the 45 players or more must not exceed 100 points). *During the 2016/17 season the PPS will be monitored and may be reduced or increased in future years.*
- All members of Ulster Bank League Panel (UBL Panel) must be registered via the IRFU Clubhouse system by no later than the date as outlined in the UBL Regulations.
- Each Club must nominate a minimum of 45 players, with no maximum number of players as long as the 100 point cap is not exceeded.
- Clubs will be required to submit their UBL playing panel a minimum of 7 days before the commencement of their respective league. The submission will occur using a pro forma indicating the player name, Registration Number, player history and point allocation. All Club Submissions will be available for reviewing on the IRFU Website. Appropriate sanctions will be applied for providing incorrect or misleading information.
- The Player points matrix outlined (overleaf) indicates the point value allocated due to a transfer.
- Any player after having been registered with the same club for 4 consecutive years (including the current season) reverts to a ‘one (1) point’ classification.

- A player registered in a club, who is in full-time third level education (i.e. register for full-time 3rd level education) who transfers to University/College Rugby Club of that institution will carry a points transfer value of 2 points in that first season. (and revert to 1 point for subsequent seasons).
- To accommodate injury and school leavers being promoted to the 1st team Panel, an 'update window' will occur at the half way point of the Ulster Bank League. Clubs will be allowed to promote up to five (5) players (and drop up to 5 players) from their panel as long as the point value does not exceed 100 points and the minimum panel does not reduce below 45 players. All players must be registered with the club in line with the regulations.
- A club can apply to the Ulster Bank League Committee to reduce the points allocation of a player who is required to relocate more than 100 km for employment or any other valid reason. For the 2016/17 season, the point reduction will be two (2) points, and will revert to 1 point for future seasons with that club. Clubs will be required to provide appropriate evidence (including evidence of residence and employment).
- A club can apply for inclusion of school leavers (of that calendar year) into the panel prior to 1st November on the basis of education requirements, as long as the 100 points cap is not exceeded. Clubs will be required to provide appropriate evidence.
- Contract, Development and Academy players will be treated the same as players transferring between clubs. A player returning to their 'Home Club' will be allocated 1 point. However, there may be exceptional cases where the IRFU and/or Branch allocates players, including Academy players to specific clubs (i.e. a Club is demoted from Div 1); in this circumstance the UBL Committee will liaise with the relevant IRFU/Branch Representative and at its discretion may decrease the transfer point value.
- The IRFU acknowledges the role of the UBL in being a platform for the development of players for the provincial and national teams. Where a club loses a Non-Contracted player to a Full Professional Contract that club may make application to the UBL Committee for a points concession for a replacement player that is transferred into the club to fill the vacancy in the UBL Panel. *(Note: for the avoidance of doubt a contracted player is either a full, development or academy player)*
- Dual-Status players can only be used by a club in exceptional circumstances and on a 'match by match' basis by prior approval of the UBL Committee. Clubs will be required to indicate which first choice player they are replacing and the dual status player comes into the panel at the same value as the player they are replacing (i.e. if they are replacing a player at 3 points then regardless of the playing history of the Dual Status Player they will also be classified at 3 points). The player substituted will be ineligible to participate in any other matches on that weekend.

3. Player Points Matrix

Note: the points only apply to the year in which they first appear in the Ulster Bank league Panel.

| | Registered with current club before 1 st September 2013 2013/14 season | Registered with current club after 1 st September 2013 2014/15 Season | Registered with current club after 1 st September 2014 2015/16 season | Registered with current club after 1 st September 2015 2016/17 Season |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| Continuous registration with Club (i.e. no registration with any other club before 1 st Sept 2013) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| School/College player returning to 'Home Club' "Home Club" player – i.e. Registered Underage player, including 'profile player' to their original Club post - Secondary School/College | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| School to Club Transfer A player with no previous affiliation with Club, (including 3 rd Level Clubs) | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| School to Club Transfer of a profile player (Profile Player with no previous registration to Club) | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Club to Club Transfer (the player moving to a club which is not their 'home club') | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---|---|---|---|---|