



**RUGBY**  
UNION SA

# Rugby Union South Australia Competition Rules 2026

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## Definitions

For the purposes of these Rules, the following definitions shall apply:

“Affiliated Union” means a body so named in, or admitted pursuant to, the Rugby Australia Constitution as being an affiliated union.

“Association” means an organisation that administers a group of clubs for the purposes of governance and regulatory requirements with respect to competitions, events, tournaments and rugby programs.

“Clearance” means the requirement for a currently registered player wishing to register at another Club on the same registration type during the season.

“Codes, Policies and Procedures” means the codes, policies and procedures of Rugby Australia and/or Rugby Union South Australia

“Insurer” means the insurance provider of the Rugby National Risk Management & Insurance Program.

“International Union” means a Rugby Union, Rugby Club, or other body based in a foreign nation and affiliated with the National Rugby Union of that nation.

“Competition” means any match played as part of either

- (i) a structured competition or series including a trial match, a friendly match, or representative match involving a Rugby Body; or
- (ii) a Sanctioned Event.

“Competition Manager” is the person deemed responsible by the Union for the day-to-day operational management of the competition.

“Event Organiser” means an organisation authorised to conduct Rugby Union programs, events, tournaments, and/or matches in Australia, pursuant to the Rugby Australia *Event Sanctioning Guidelines*,

“Judiciary” is the Sub Committee as appointed by the Union.

“Laws of the Game” mean the laws of Rugby as published by World Rugby, including any variations authorised by World Rugby or Rugby Australia.

“Management Committee” is the committee appointed by the Union to oversee the management of the competition.

“Member Union” means an Australian State or Territory union in membership of Rugby Australia.

Participant means:

- a) Players that are registered with or entitled to participate with a Relevant Organisation or in a rugby Activity;
- b) Coaches appointed to train a Player or Team in a Relevant Organisation or in a rugby Activity;
- c) Administrators that have a role in the administration or operation of a Relevant Organisation or in a rugby Activity, including owners, directors, committee members, employees or other persons;
- d) Officials including referees, citing commissioners, television match officials, or other officials appointed by a Relevant Organisation, or any league, competition, series, Club or Team sanctioned by a Relevant Organisation;
- e) Support Personnel that are appointed in a professional or voluntary capacity by a Relevant Organisation including, but not limited to, sports science / sport medicine personnel, Team managers, agents, selectors, and Team staff members; and
- f) Other individuals that attend rugby Activities or facilities, including but not limited to, parents, guardians, spectators, and sponsors.

“Player” means a player of the game of Rugby.

“Registered” means a Player and/or non-playing Participant who has completed effective registration and paid all applicable fees and levies.

“Regulations” means the regulations published and amended by World Rugby and Rugby Australia from time to time.

“Rugby” means rugby union football.

Rugby Australia or Rugby AU or RA means Rugby Australia Ltd (ACN 002 898 544).

“Rugby Body” means Rugby Australia, any Member Union or Affiliated Union of Rugby Australia, or any Rugby Union, Club or other body in membership with or affiliated with Rugby Australia, a Member Union or an Affiliated Union.

“Rugby Club” or “Club” means any club affiliated with a Member Union or an affiliated Rugby Body, that is a participant of the competition.

“Rugby Xplorer” means Rugby Australia’s online registration and competition management system.

“Rules” means the National Model Competition Rules and the Competition Rules of the Specific Union.

“RUSA” means Rugby Union South Australia, which is a Member Union of Rugby Australia.

“Sanctioned Event” means an event, tournament, and/or matches conducted by an authorised Event Organiser that have received formal approval.

“Specific Union” means the governing body of the competition.

“WR” means World Rugby.

## Preamble

These Rules set out the minimum standards and procedures that apply to Competitions conducted under the jurisdiction of Rugby Australia and its Member Unions.

This Competition, as with all competitions played under the auspices of RUSA, are community competitions. All Participants in the Competition are to be made aware of the [WR Playing Charter](#); which includes the:

[Principles of the Game](#)

[Principles of the Laws](#)

All Participants are to be made aware that by virtue of the acceptance of a team into this competition the match organiser e.g. RUSA and their respective Participants subject themselves and agree to be bound by the Rules of the Competition and all applicable Policies and Procedures.

## Laws of the Game

All games will be played in terms of the WR Laws of the Game, including any of the following variations:

- Tackle Height Law Variation (as part of 2024/2025 World Rugby Global Law Trial)
  - Law 9.13 A player must not tackle an opponent early, late, or dangerous. Dangerous tackling includes, but is not limited to, tackling, or attempting to tackle an opponent above the line of the sternum even if the tackle starts below the line of the sternum.
- WR Under 19 Variations (a) Rugby AU Under 19 Variations
  - Rugby Union SA will participate in Rugby Australia's Junior Law Variations Pilot in 2026. Details of these new variations will be provided separately.
- WR Sevens (7-a-side) Variations
- WR 10s (10-a-side) Variations
- WR Game On Variations - see later section in this document Game On Variations applied in a specific Competitions
- WR Leisure Modified Formats including Cross-Field (RugbyX), Beach 5s etc.
  - (a) Rugby AU Cross-Field 7s
- Rugby AU Kids Pathway U6 to U12
  - Rugby Union SA will participate in Rugby Australia's Junior Law Variations Pilot in 2026. Details of these new variations will be provided separately.
- Rugby AU Veterans Rugby Laws
- Tri Tag Rugby Laws

Competitions may submit a request to a specific law variation to the Law Advisory Group by filling in the Rugby Australia Law Variation Submission Form

## Governance of the Competition

All matches in the Competition shall be played in accordance with the [WR Regulations of the Game](#) and Rugby Australia Regulations, Codes and Policies etc. (see section 4 below).

In addition, Rugby AU publishes '[Game Management Guidelines](#)' annually that have been prepared to assist Unions in the administration and playing of the game in domestic competitions within Australia.

RUSA Competition Manager will be responsible for the overall governance of the Competitions operating in South Australia.

## Rugby AU Codes and Policies

The effective governance and administration of rugby require adherence to a wide range of codes and policies around safety & welfare, integrity, inclusion, member protection & child safety and privacy etc. Therefore, all matches shall be played in accordance with all [Rugby AU Codes, Policies and Procedures](#):

### Safety & Welfare

Rugby must be as safe, inclusive, and fair as possible. Rugby Australia has several policies and initiatives aimed at ensuring that rugby is safe to play and is enjoyable for all participants.

- Concussion Management;
- Serious Injuries and Injury Reporting;
- Welfare Initiatives;
- Player Dispensation;
- Match Day Safety; and
- First Aid medical.

### Child Safeguarding

Rugby Australia is committed to ensuring that rugby is a safe environment for children and young people.

- Child Safe Framework and Guidelines;
- Reporting
- Working with Children Checks

Before engaging with minors, all adults must ensure they have a valid WWCC, including coaches of women's teams that have minors in attendance. This can be acquired through the club or via <https://screening.sa.gov.au/applications>

### Integrity

Rugby Australia's Codes, Policies and Procedures have been developed to provide a safe, fair and inclusive sporting environment for all rugby participants in Australia.

This includes the following:

- *Rugby Australia Disciplinary Rules* - these have been developed to ensure a consistent approach to foul play, citing and judicial hearings;
- *Anti-Doping Code* - all participants are bound by the Anti-Doping Code and must be aware of the requirements;
- *Sports Supplement Policy*;
- *Illicit Drugs Policy*
- *Code of Conduct* – provides a set of standards that everyone involved in rugby is required to comply with to ensure that the image and integrity of the sport is protected. The Code also outlines the procedures for reporting, complaint handling and investigations of any alleged breaches;
  - (i) Refer to Appendix 1 for Flow Chart on process
- *Medical Policy* - provides information on the use of medications, medical procedures and measures to protect the health and welfare for semi-professional and professional players;
- *Child and Young Person Safeguarding Policy*– ensures that all Participants feel included and safe in rugby; and
- *Anti-Corruption and Betting Policy* – applies to all Participants and they need to be aware of its requirements.

Additionally, the following documents are included as part of these Competition Rules:

- Inclusion Policy;
- Safety and Participation Policy;
- Registration Regulations;
- Registration Terms and Conditions; and
- Smart Rugby Policy.
- Rugby AU Social Media Policy

Any concerns that arise as a result of an alleged breach of any of the above provisions can be reported at [Report a Concern](#).

## Team Coaches

Each team competing in a RUSA sanctioned match or event is required to have a Smart Rugby qualified Coach present at every match.

This is a compulsory coaching requirement for all coaches and assistant coaches from U8s and above.

### Season Ready Completion

This course is designed to provide coaches, match officials, volunteers and others involved in our great global game, with an understanding of how Global Law Trial implementation supports player welfare and safety

## Hot Weather Policy

Where the maximum forecast temperature is predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology to exceed 35 degrees on a day scheduled for a match or a RUSA facilitated training session, the match or RUSA training session may be postponed to cooler conditions (or a cooler part of the day) or cancelled. <http://www.bom.gov.au/>

The decision to postpone a match or RUSA training session will be made by RUSA. The decision will be posted to RUSA website (<https://sa.rugby/events>) and each Club secretary (or Representative Team Manager) will be contacted by 10am on the day of scheduled match or training session only if postponement or cancellation will occur.

Any matches scheduled before 10am will be notified by 7am the day of the match, only if postponement or cancellation will occur.

Where the maximum forecast temperature is predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology to be between 30-35 degrees on a day scheduled for a match or RUSA facilitated training session, the match will commence with no more than two halves of 30 minutes (including injury time) and there will be water breaks after approximately 15 minutes in each half.

Training sessions will consist of no longer than 60 minutes of intensive activity with water breaks every 15 minutes.

The decision to implement hot weather protocol to alter game times and training duration will be made by RUSA. The decision will be posted to RUSA website (<https://sa.rugby/events>) and each Club secretary (or Representative Team Manager) will be contacted by 10am, on the day of the scheduled match or training session only if hot weather protocol will occur. Any matches scheduled before 10am will be notified by 7am only if the hot weather protocol will occur.

## Lightning Policy

When the lightning strike is within 10km of the venue, it is recommended that players are removed from the pitch. The speed of sound through air is approximately 343 meters per second, so for every 5 seconds of time between the lightning flash and the associated thunder clap, the strike is 1.715km away. The approximate distance can be calculated by counting the time (in seconds) between the two events and dividing it by 5. Recommended safe distances from the lightning event is 10kms.

For events/venues where live data direct from local weather services is not available, the 30/30 rule should be used to ensure participant and spectator safety:

- Shelter should be sought when there is 30 seconds or less between the flash and the associated thunder clap.
- Thunderstorms have a tendency to reverse course and come back over an area that they have just passed. Recommendations on best practice also state that it should only be considered safe to return to the field of play a minimum of 30 minutes after the final flash of lightning or clap of thunder has been seen/heard.

We recommend that each Club has a delegate with the "My Lightning Tracker" app. There is a free and pro version of the app, and can give reference to how close lightning strikes are and when the last strike was.

Please refer to World Rugby policy regarding lightning for further information.

## Rugby AU Standard Competition Rules

The National Standard Competition Rules, as they appear herein, have been edited (where required) to reflect their application in the South Australian (RUSA) Competitions.

### Club Jerseys

- a) Jerseys must have unique numbering clearly printed on the back of the jersey to separately identify each player. Jerseys must be numbered 1 to 23, with numbers up to 25 (e.g. for blood replacement jersey) being acceptable. Clubs presenting different numbers should consult RUSA.
- b) Any Club wanting to change the primary colour/design of their jersey (including special event jerseys) must first submit their design to RUSA and the dates for which the jersey will be used, in order to avoid clashes in jersey colours so far as is reasonably practicable.
- c) All club jersey designs must be submitted to RUSA, no later than the 28<sup>th</sup> February each year.

### Registration and Match Day – Rugby Xplorer

- a) All Players, Non-Playing Members and Match Officials are to be registered via Rugby Australia's Rugby Xplorer System;
- b) It is a requirement of Rugby Australia that the Rugby Xplorer Competition Management System (CMS) is also used for all sub-Union Competition matches, both Senior and Junior.

### Playing Field

- a) Clubs hosting matches played under these rules shall comply with the [RA Medical and First Aid requirements](#)
- b) With respect to medical requirements, both teams are responsible for ensuring that matches are not played if all the requirements relating to medical care are not in place. Reference should be made to the Rugby Australia Medical and Safety Recommendations for further information.
- c) For all Competition matches the host club shall be responsible for ensuring that the field of play is correctly marked in accordance with the WR Laws of the Game.
- d) Goal Posts - All Goal posts within the playing enclosure must be padded.

### Playing Enclosure

Refer to Appendix 2 for Playing Enclosure Setup

- a) Entry to the playing enclosure must be restricted by a fence, barricade or rope at a minimum of five metres, where practicable, from the playing area perimeter.
- b) Persons authorised to enter the Playing Enclosure ("authorised persons") are as follows:
  - a. Coaching Staff, Team Management and Reserve Player are permitted within, provided they are wearing a RUSA approved bib OR can be outside the playing enclosure without a RUSA approved bib.
  - b. Medically Qualified Persons/Sports Trainer – maximum two per team
  - c. The Playing Teams
  - d. Referee
  - e. Assistant Referees (two)
  - f. No. 4 and No. 5
  - g. Water carriers – maximum two per team (three allowed in 7s)
  - h. A maximum of 4 ball persons – two per team
  - i. Photographer – maximum one per team
- c) All Authorised Persons permitted to enter the playing enclosure should have some distinguishing mark/bib e.g. high vis vest.
- d) For the avoidance of doubt, the Head Coach cannot also occupy a role within the playing enclosure (e.g. medical or water carrier)

- e) Where there is no room for Reserve Players to warm up outside the playing enclosure, they are permitted to warm up in the opposition in-goal area provided no equipment is used (e.g. balls, hit shields) and players retreat from in-goal when play is in the closest 22m area.

## Competition Draw

- a) The Competition will be conducted in accordance with a schedule of matches drawn up prior to the start of the playing season and varied as necessary from time to time.
- b) Where possible, all matches in a “round” are to be played in an ascending order i.e. lowest grade to highest grade. Where this is not possible, no player who has started in a higher grade is permitted to participate (i.e. start / reserve) for a lower grade.
- The only exception being in junior age-grade rugby where a player may play within the same age-grade, or in different eligible age-grades.
  - Changes to playing order must be confirmed with the President of both teams and the Competition Manager.
- c) In the event of matches in the same round being played on different days (e.g. rescheduled matches due to wet weather) the selection of players must be the same as if all matches in the same round were being played on the same day.

## Match Team Lists, Scoring and Stats

- a) In Rugby Xplorer Match Day App, it is the responsibility of both teams to ensure that:
- All players and team officials (where required by the Competition) are selected in their respective team list for the match;
  - All details of point scorers are recorded;
  - All players who have been either temporarily suspended (yellow card), sent from the field of play (red card) or have a suspected concussion (blue card) must have all their details recorded; and
  - All movements of players following an injury (blood or otherwise) or for tactical reasons shall be recorded (where required by the Competition).
- b) Match day scoring, and stats can be entered by ONE team manager for BOTH teams, or EACH team manager for their OWN team. It is permissible to have an independently appointed ground manager that does the scoring for both teams.
- c) The referee is to confirm the result of the match (including Red, Yellow and Blue Cards) by confirming this on the Match Day App in the presence of both teams.
- d) All clubs must enter the team list, scoring and stats of all matches online via the Match Day App by no later 10 minutes after the completion of the match.
- e) Clubs/Teams failing to follow the procedures are liable to receive penalties per Member Union Rules or Specific Competition Rules (e.g. a penalty may be a deduction in Competition Points).

## Competition Points

- a) Where matches are awarded, Competition points the following standard points shall be used:
- Points for a win – four (4) points.
  - Points for a draw – two (2) points.
  - Points for a loss – zero (0) points.
  - Points for a bye (where applicable) – zero (0) points.
- b) Bonus points may also be awarded as follows:
- Points for loss by seven points or less – one (1) point.
  - Points for scoring four tries – one (1) point.
- c) RUSA may determine that further points may be awarded or deducted for defined situations provided the circumstances under which those points will be allocated are advised to all Clubs.

## Ladder Positions

- a) Positions in the ladder are determined on the ladder sorting options applicable for the Competition. In the event of two or more teams being equal on Competition points, for any position, the higher placed team will be determined by:
  - i. Competition Points
  - ii. Average Points Difference (in matches played between the teams on equal Competition Points)
  - iii. Average Points "for" (in matches played between the teams on equal Match Points and Points Difference)
  - iv. Average points difference in matches played against the next lowest team on the Competition Ladder following completion of minor rounds.
  - v. Where the above is all equal between two (or more) particular teams, then the relative positions of those teams will be determined by reference to the number of disciplinary offences committed by each Team during the Minor Rounds, with the team recording the least number of disciplinary offences being allotted the higher position
  - vi. Where (i) to (v) above are all equal between two (or more) particular teams, then the relative positions of these two teams will be determined by the drawing of lots by RUSA with the first drawn team being allotted the higher position.
- b) For teams in the same grade that have played a different number of games in the Minor Rounds (due to an uneven number of BYEs in that Competition), their Competition Points will be adjusted via an averaging formula to ensure that all teams finish the Minor Rounds on the same number of matches.
- c) For the avoidance of doubt, where 2 (or more) teams end on the same competition points, the team finishing higher on the table after applying 7.5(b)(ii) – (vi) will be provided an additional Competition Point in Rugby Xplorer so the finishing positions in the public ladder are accurate.

## Game On

- a) The underlying principle of the Game On Rules is to provide a flexible solution to local participation issues, while still promoting the Community XVs Rugby format. At all times, our aim remains to play 15-a-side wherever possible, but where not possible the Game On Rules will still allow for a competitive match to be played.
- b) The Game On Rules apply to all RUSA competition age-grades, except for Premier Grade (Mens) and U12s.
- c) The Game On Rules do not apply during any Finals match **excluding the Womens Challenge Cup final, competed for mid-season** (all other Finals matches are 15-a-side plus reserves).
- d) Teams must be equal at the commencement of the match with player numbers on the pitch for each team being (10 permitted in U12s) 11, 12, 13, 14 or 15-a-side (plus reserves up to 23)
- e) Team(s) with less than 15 players available must play with all available players. e.g. if you have 13 players available, you play with 13. You don't play with 12, plus 1 reserve.
- f) The team with the fewest players (between 11 and 15 players) determines the number of players the match is commenced with.
- g) Once the match has commenced, injuries or players arriving late don't further alter the number of players on or allowed on the pitch as applied prior to the commencement of the match. e.g. if a player is injured, you play with 1 less player. If a player arrives late, you play with 1 reserve player.
- h) EXCEPTION - In U12 Age Grade teams must share players to achieve maximum participation
  - a. in circumstance of injury – teams must continue to balance to have maximum participation with equal number of players on each team.
  - b. in circumstance of incident resulting in yellow/red card – team of the player with the yellow/red card must serve player penalty per prescribed time period.
- i) **In U14 age grade through to Reserves, there is no mandatory requirement for teams to share players or maintain equal player numbers (in the event of injury or red/yellow card)**

- i. In the spirit of the Game On principles and to promote participation, Clubs are strongly encouraged to work collaboratively to ensure fixtures proceed wherever reasonably possible. This may include, by mutual agreement of both teams and the referee, sharing players, adjusting player numbers, or making other practical amendments to avoid a forfeit.
- j) All games will be played under XV's laws (and any applicable pathways laws) Contested and Uncontested Scrum Policy still applies
- k) Game Duration is adjusted regardless of age-grade:
  - i. 10-a-side = 40 minutes (20 minutes per half)
  - ii. 11-a-side = 50 minutes (25 minutes per half)
  - iii. 12 / 13 -a-side = 60 minutes (30 minutes per half) unless U12 & U14 grades which are a maximum of 25-minute halves
  - iv. 14 / 15 -a-side = 70 minutes (35 minutes per half) unless U12 & U14 grades which are a maximum of 25-minute halves or U16 which have maximum 30-minute halves.
- l) Where there is time remaining in the allocated timeslot, teams are encouraged to play a further period of rugby as a "friendly" match (i.e. not for competition points), to maximise participation opportunity.

## Forfeits

- a) Five (5) Competition Points (with a deemed score of twenty-eight (28) points to zero (0)) will be awarded to a Team whose opponent has forfeited a Match. Where both teams forfeit, no Competition Points will be awarded.
- b) In senior rugby a forfeit in any higher grade will result in an automatic forfeit in the lower grade(s) in the same round. The exception to this in the 2026 season is for the Adelaide University Sharks, playing as a Third Grade Adelaide University Team, who do not need to forfeit their match in Third Grade in the event that Adelaide University Reserve Grade are required to forfeit.
- c) There will be no refund of player registration fees from RUSA or Rugby Australia in the case of forfeited matches.

A Club that forfeits two games in the same grade in the same season will be issued a Show Cause Notice to explain the reasons why its team should remain in that grade.

- a) In the case of a club withdrawing a team(s) from the Competition, the opposition of a withdrawn team will retain all For, Against and Competition points for matches already played. All future matches against the withdrawn team will be recorded as a Forfeit, and competition points awarded, unless deemed otherwise by the Union.
- b) The Competition Manager may impose further penalties on Clubs for withdrawing teams from the Competition. This will include a financial liability of \$1,000 per Senior Team and \$500 per Junior Team (U12 to U18), at the discretion of the Competition Manager.
- c) There will be no refund of player registration fees from RUSA or Rugby Australia for players of a team withdrawing from a Competition.

## Postponed / Abandoned Matches

- a) If the venue of a match or matches is unavailable for any reason, it shall be the responsibility of the home club to advise the Competition Manager immediately that the ground is considered unplayable or doubtful of being playable. The Competition Manager, after consultation with the clubs involved, shall direct how the abandoned match will be dealt with.
- b) In the event of a match having to be abandoned for any reason beyond the control of the match officials, the following procedure shall apply:
  - a. Where a match has been abandoned during the first half, the result may be declared as a draw and no points for or against will be awarded, or the match may be replayed at a time and venue as determined by the Competition Manager in his/her absolute discretion.
  - b. Where a match has been abandoned during half time or during the second half, the result at the time of the abandonment will be the final result.

- i. In the event of a match having to be abandoned for any reason involving unacceptable behaviour on the part of players or any other persons, or any other similar reason, the Competition Manager shall determine if any penalties will be imposed on the competing teams and/or Clubs.
- ii. It should be noted that any such action taken under these Rules shall not prevent (and may run in parallel with) other action that is deemed necessary under the Disciplinary Rules, Code of Conduct or other relevant WR or Rugby Australia regulations, codes, policies or rules etc.

## Schedule of Penalties

- a) A breach of any of the Competition Rules may include any or all of the following:
  - Warning;
  - Loss of Competition points;
  - Issue of a *Show Cause Notice*;
  - Monetary Fine;
  - Issue of a Strike, in accordance with Rugby Australia and
  - Expulsion from the Competition.

## Protests

- a) Protests against the Competition Rules
  - a. All protests regarding these Competition Rules must be made in writing and signed by either the club President or club Secretary;
  - b. Protests referring to an alleged breach of the Competition Rules must be received by the Competition Manager by the close of business on the first business day after the alleged breach;
  - c. All protests must specify the particular Competition Rule that has been allegedly breached;
  - d. All witness statements must be signed;
  - e. The decision on the protests shall be determined by the Competition Manager and such decision will be notified to the parties as soon as is reasonably practicable.
  - f. The Competition Manager shall determine if a club has breached the competition rules on the civil standard of proof (i.e. more likely than not). The Competition Manager will then recommend to the CEO the penalties that should be imposed. The Management Committee shall make the final determination in this regard.
  - g. If the club is not satisfied with this decision, it has the right to appeal to the RUSA Judicial Committee. Appeals from the decision of the Management Committee must be received by the Competition Manager by no later than close of business three (3) business days after the decision of the Management Committee is advised to the relevant club. The Judicial Committee shall be entitled to consider whether or not a breach of the Rules has occurred and/or the appropriateness of the penalty and shall have the discretion to vary the decision if they see fit and impose any other penalty as set on in the Rules. The Judicial Committee has the sole discretion as to how it will deal with any appeal.
- b) Protests on other decisions made by RUSA
  - a. All protests must be made in writing and signed by either the club President or club Secretary;
  - b. Protests referring to other decisions made by RUSA (excluding decisions made with regards to Competition Rules, Judiciary, Code of Conduct and Member Protection procedures) must be received by the CEO no later than 2 business days following the decision;
  - c. All protests must specify the particulars of the decision to be protested;
  - d. All witness statements must be signed;
  - e. The decision on the protests shall be determined by the CEO, in consultation with the RUSA Integrity Committee, and will be delivered by the CEO as soon as reasonably practicable;
  - f. If the club is not satisfied with this decision, it has the right to appeal to the RUSA Board. Appeals from the decision of the CEO must be received by the Chairman of the Board by no later than close of business three (3) business days after the decision of the CEO is advised to the relevant club. The RUSA Board shall have the discretion to vary the decision if they see fit and will have sole discretion as to how they will deal with any appeal.

## Citations

Refer to Appendix 3 for Citation Flow Chart  
Appendix 4 Citation Referral Form

- a) A Citing Complaint Referral Form must be lodged in writing by **12:00pm** on the first Business Day following the alleged incident with a payment of \$200.
- b) A Citing Complaint Referral can only be raised against players participating in competitions in U14 and above.
- c) If a Citing Complaint Referral results in a Citing Commissioner Warning or a Citing Report for a player, then \$150 of the \$200 payment will be refunded to the Complainant.
- d) Upon receipt of a Citing Complaint Referral, the Union will forward the details received to the appointed Citing Commissioner for their review.
- e) The Citing Commissioner will determine, by reference to the Citing Complaint Referral and any other sources of information available, whether the act:
  - a. Meets the red-card threshold, in which case a Citing Report is provided and the matter is referred to the Judicial Committee for hearing; or
  - b. Falls just short of satisfying the red-card threshold, in which case a Citing Commissioner Warning is provided; or
  - c. no Citing Commissioner action.
- f) Any Player (including an Age-Grade player) who is the subject of a Citing Report by a Citing Commissioner are provisionally suspended and are required to attend a hearing at the earliest possible opportunity following the citing.
- g) If the Player which is the subject of a Citing Report fails to appear before the Judicial Committee, that Player will be ineligible to play in any matches in the competition until such time as they do appear before the Judicial Committee.

## Extension of Time

Notwithstanding any of the time limits stated in these Rules, the Competition Manager may in special circumstances exercise their sole discretion to allow reasonable extensions of time if considered to be in the interests of justice to do so.

## Disqualified, unqualified or suspended person/s

It shall be the responsibility of each club to ensure that no disqualified, unqualified or suspended person(s), including person(s) with an un-serviced debt to RUSA, take part in any match.

## Law and Regulation Clarifications

### Number of Players (WR Law 3) – The Team (number of replacement / substitute players).

- a) Rolling Replacements - World Rugby Law 3.34 is mandatory across all domestic rugby played in Australia.
- b) Unlimited rolling replacements applies to all rugby aged U18 and below;
  - a. Rolling replacements, with a maximum of 12 movements applies to Senior Women and Third Grade;
  - b. Rolling replacements, with a maximum of 8 movements applies to Reserve Grade and Premier Grade.
- c) Replacements due to blood injury, concussion or injury due to foul play do not count in the designated number of movements.
- d) Law 3.27 i.e. Temporary Replacement – Head Injury Assessment (HIA), **DOES NOT APPLY AT ANY LEVEL.**

### Uncontested Scrums

- a) It is recognised that on occasion and due to circumstances, such as unavailability of players starting the match, or that an injury or incident during a match may make contested scrums not possible. Therefore, the following Laws are applicable:
  - a. Law 3.13 – 3.20 (inclusive), but excluding Law 3.17
- b) World Rugby Law 3.16 allows Rugby Australia (and RUSA) to implement, at its discretion, a mechanism to discourage uncontested scrums by having a team play short of players if they cause uncontested scrums.
  - a. There must be sufficient players to play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required, and on the first occasion that a replacement prop forward is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.
  - b. Should a team not be able to meet this obligation for any reason during a game, or should a team not have three suitably trained front row players to commence a game with contested scrums, then the team concerned must play with one player fewer than would otherwise be allowed.
  - c. If, subsequently, a qualified front rower becomes available so that scrums can be contested then that player will be allowed onto the field and the team may return to the appropriate complement of players.
  - d. If neither team has suitably trained front row players to start a game with contested scrums, the above arrangements do not apply to the game, even if qualified front rowers subsequently become available.

### Player Status, Player Contracts and Player Movement (WR Regulation 4)

- a) International Clearance
  - a. The International Player Clearances Policy within Rugby is set out in WR Regulation 4.6.1 and provides:
    - i. A Player leaving their current Union to play in another Union shall not be registered or eligible to participate in competitions organised, recognised or sanctioned by that new Union until they have an endorsed International Clearance.
    - ii. Therefore, Players wishing to play within another International Union are required to complete the Rugby Australia [International Clearance Form](#).
    - iii. For Incoming International Clearances (i.e. Players arriving in Australia), please contact the Union you are currently registered with to understand their International Clearance process and obtain, complete and return their current application form.
    - iv. Clubs who are found to have international players who have registered and play in any RUSA Competition match without an approved International Clearance will be subject to penalties.
- b) Domestic Clearance
  - a. This relates to Club-to-Club player movements for currently registered players, particularly where players are seeking to play at a Club to/from a State/Territory other than South

Australia. The player cannot register unless clearance approval is granted (via Rugby Xplorer processes) by their 'from' Club and Association.

- b. Clearance request must be lodged by players by 3pm Friday preceding competition.
  - c. Attempting to register for a new club within the same competition season will prompt a clearance request from their old club. Once the clearance has been granted by all parties, the individual will get a notification to say their clearance has been granted. They are then required to log back into Rugby Xplorer and register for the new club.
  - d. A granted clearance does not mean the player can take the field, they are required to complete the registration process with their new club.
  - e. A player shall not receive a clearance from one South Australian club to another South Australian club once they have played for more than two (2) different junior or senior clubs within the current season.
  - f. The Competition Manager shall only consider extenuating circumstances from the player to allow an exemption to this rule.
  - g. At the end of the competition season (signified by RX registration rollover date) all registrations are automatically expired. Players do not require a clearance to register to a new club at the commencement of a new competition season. The onus is on the club to collect any outstanding fees/debts between the player and the club before the RX rollover date.
  - h. Players who have been granted a clearance cannot play for two clubs in the one round.
- c) Junior Association to Senior Association
- a. A player who is playing in both U18 and Senior divisions must register to their Junior Club first, then follow the Rugby Xplorer clearance process to register for their Senior Club. When a player has their clearance approved (and they have completed registration for the Senior Club), they will remain visible by **both** the Junior Club and Senior Club.

# Rugby Union South Australia (RUSA) Member Union Rules

## Pre-Season Delivery

1. RUSA will liaise with Clubs for the collection/ delivery to the Club of the approved number of match balls for mandatory use in their senior home games. Three (3) match balls are required to be provided by the Home Club at each home match.
2. The match balls are to be inflated to the required psi of 9.5-10.0 lbs per square inch (psi) as required by Law 2 of the WR Laws of the Game.

## Conditions of the Competition Rules

3. Rugby Union South Australia (RUSA) Competition Rules shall be read subject to the Constitution of Rugby Union South Australia. The Constitution shall take priority over the Competition Rules.
4. The terms and definitions set out in the Constitution shall, unless otherwise specifically stated in the Competition Rules, mean the same in the Competition Rules as in the Constitution.

## Playing Enclosure

Refer to Appendix 2 for Playing Enclosure and Technical Zone

5. The playing field for competition matches (which excludes games for <U12) shall be a full-sized pitch.
6. The host club team shall be responsible for marking and flagging of the pitch, the erection of appropriate barriers and supply of safety equipment for the playing enclosure in accordance with the Laws of the Game.
7. In the case of a match on a neutral playing enclosure the responsibility for the flagging and marking of the playing enclosure shall lie with the drawn home team unless otherwise determined by the Competition Manager.
8. If the playing enclosure is not marked to the satisfaction of the Referee, managers and captains of both teams shall be informed and the breach reported to the Competition Manager by the first working day following the match.
9. At all RUSA matches the host club is to provide a properly prepared and roped playing enclosure otherwise the Referee may abandon the match and competition points will be awarded to the visiting team.

## Referees

10. Referees shall be appointed to matches in accordance with their group ranking, as determined by the appointed SARURA Grading Panel and the priority listing established for all grades.
  - a. No Referee under the age of 17 should be appointed to a match within 2 years below their own age group. e.g. if a referee is 15, they may appoint to referee the U13s and below. With no U13 division, the referee is eligible to facilitate games in U12s.
  - b. No Assistant Referee under the age of 17 should be appointed to a match more than 2 years above their own age group. e.g. if a referee is 13, they may be appointed to assistant referee in the U15s and below. With no U15 division, the referee is eligible to facilitate games in U14s.
  - c. Exceptions to the above may be made in rare cases where a referee may benefit from a development experience in a controlled environment with appropriate support from ARs and referee coaches. Under no circumstances may a referee be regularly appointed outside of these guidelines.
11. In the event there are not sufficient Referees available to Referee competition matches, SARURA will advise both participating clubs for 'Club to Appoint'. The home team is required to appoint a person who is Smart Rugby compliant to Referee the match. The club shall advise Referee President who this person is. ([referees@sa.rugby](mailto:referees@sa.rugby))
12. At the end of the match, the Referee shall check the Match Day app on both team managers device and should ensure all incidents and scores have been entered in correctly.

13. If there are discrepancies in what the team managers have entered on the Match Day app, referees are advised to score or cards recorded through their match scorecard.
14. Referees will submit their match scorecard to RUSA by 5pm Sunday following the game, to verify cards and scores in each game where competition points are awarded.
15. If there is no Smart Rugby compliant person or, if required, an accredited Referee available from either the host or visiting club to conduct the match then the game shall not commence. In such a case the host club shall be deemed responsible for failing to provide a referee and at the discretion of the Competition Manager, the match will be deemed forfeited by the home side.
16. If during the first half and prior to its completion the appointed or replacement referee is injured and cannot continue and there is no further replacement available from either team, then the match shall not continue. The match shall be declared unplayable and each team shall be allocated two (2) competition points in all grades. In each case, no score line shall be recorded.
17. If during the half time break or second half of a match a RUSA appointed referee is injured and cannot continue and a reserve referee or host or visiting club replacement is not available, the match shall be declared played and no further time permitted the score at the time of the stoppage shall stand and be recorded as the result for the purposes of awarding competition points.
18. Under extenuation circumstances of the above two rules, the Competition Manager is permitted to make a decision on the match result to ensure the fairest outcome is met.
19. Any volunteer Referee for Get into Rugby U4-7, U8 and U10 matches must at minimum be:
  - a. Smart Rugby compliant
  - b. Working with Child Check compliant
    - i. The team listed as the "Home" team for any match in Get into Rugby U4-7, U8 and U10 will be responsible for appointing a referee if a referee is required

## **Assistant Referees**

20. In the absence of appointed Assistant Referees for grade where competition points are awarded, each team shall provide one Assistant Referee for each match in which it plays. The Referee shall have the power to use or to dispense with an Assistant Referee at any time during the match, and to appoint any other.
21. A non-accredited Assistant Referee shall be permitted to report Foul Play provided the Referee is satisfied with the accuracy and integrity of the person providing the report. In such cases it is at the Referee's discretion as to how they should act upon such a report.
22. Each Assistant Referee appointed by the club shall wear a distinctive vest or bib.
23. Each club shall be responsible for the accreditation, appointment, competence and proper attire of its Assistant Referees. The responsibilities of Assistant Referees are defined in the Laws of the Game.
24. An Assistant Referee shall not be the coach of a participating team and during the course of his duties shall not coach or barrack for a participating team or dissent the rulings of the Match Referee.

## **Ground Marshals**

25. There must be at minimum one (1) Ground Marshal for each team
26. A Ground Marshal must be minimum 18 years of age.
27. The Ground Marshal must be wearing a high-visibility outer garment so they are easily identifiable in their role.
28. A Ground Marshal must be an individual who is only responsible for that role (i.e. must not occupy 2 roles for that match).
  - a. By exception (e.g. where a single team is playing away from the rest of the Club) then the Team Manager could also be the Ground Marshal for that match.

29. All other roles, cannot share the Ground Marshal role (e.g. you cannot be a Ground Marshal and also be a Coach, Player, Water Runner, Trainer, Photographer etc)
30. Both Ground Marshals must make themselves known to each other and to the Referee (and other Match Officials) prior to the match commencing. The Referee may delay the commencement of the match if there is not a Ground Marshal identified for each team.
31. Both Ground Marshals must:
  - i. Monitor and manage spectator behaviour for the duration of the match
  - ii. Support Match Officials with Red/ Yellow Card management
  - iii. Enter the field of play if the Referee has stopped the game and requires support (e.g. for serious injury or dealing with sideline behaviour)
32. In order to effectively monitor spectator behaviour, Ground Marshals are not located in the coaching area and are actively moving within their own spectator areas.
33. Support Match Officials to achieve a “Cooling Off Period” – which is the 15-minute (at least) window immediately following the completion of a match in line with current Game Management Guidelines.

## Photographers

34. Club Photographers are generally appointed by a Club under an agreement. Photographers should be mindful of content captured, meeting expectations under the Child and Young Persons framework.
35. Photographers are responsible for providing and wearing their own high- visibility vest that identifies them as a photographer operating within the playing enclosure.
36. Within the Playing Enclosure Photographers must remain:
  - i. Outside of the area identified as the Assistant Referee Corridor (the area approx. 1.5m parallel to the Touch Line); and
  - ii. No closer than 3m in proximity to Match Officials
  - iii. Avoid blocking line of site of Team Coaches and/or medical trainers.
37. Photographers must remain silent while within the playing enclosure, and be conscious that while they are within the playing enclosure they are not a spectator (i.e. not permitted to shout, yell, barrack or otherwise communicate to match officials and/or players)

## Match Day App

38. It is the responsibility of both teams to ensure that:
  - i. All players and team officials must be selected in their respective team list for the match;
  - ii. All details of point scorers are to be recorded;
  - iii. All players who have either been temporarily suspended (yellow card), sent from the field of play (red card) or have a suspected concussion (blue card) must have all their details recorded;
  - iv. All movements of players following an injury (blood or otherwise) or for tactical reasons shall be recorded;
  - v. The match day scoring, and stats can be entered by ONE team manager for BOTH teams, or EACH team manager for their OWN team. It is also permissible to have an independently appointed ground manager that does the scoring for both teams;
  - vi. The referee is to confirm the result of the match by confirming this on the Match Day App in the presence of both teams; and
  - vii. ALL clubs must enter the team list via the Match Day app at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled kick off time of the game, and scoring, movements, cards and stats of all matches via the Match Day App by no later than 10 minutes at the completion of the match.
  - viii. Results will be made official once both team managers and the referee have agreed on the score and pressed ‘END’ on the Match Day app.
  - ix. Team managers must not press ‘END’ until they have consulted their opposing team manager and referee.
  - x. If data can’t be submitted on the Match Day App due to technical issues, including team lists, they must be submitted to RUSA via email ([info@sa.rugby](mailto:info@sa.rugby)) by 12.00pm on the Sunday following the game.
  - xi. The failure to comply with Rugby Xplorer requirements shall be deemed misconduct and be liable to a penalty, not exceeding \$50 for each Team Match Report/score not presented as requested. If a club is consistently in breach of the requirements the matter may be reported to

the RUSA CEO who, at their discretion, may impose further sanctions including additional financial penalties and the loss of competition points.

## Juniors

39. Once a player has turned 18, they are eligible to play in the Senior competition. Players turning 18 years of age in the calendar year, but not yet 18 years of age, may participate after receiving a Senior Rugby Dispensation.

## Junior Dispensations

40. RUSA follow Rugby Australia's Dispensation Procedures. Please head to the following link for all relevant information. <https://australia.rugby/about/codes-and-policies/safety-and-welfare/player-dispensation>
41. New dispensation requests from clubs will not be accepted after Round 8.
42. Clubs shall be able to use club-based Assessing Coaches, for players aged between 7-14 seeking Age Grade Dispensation UP two age grades. RUSA will not consider dispensations for players to play in an age grade two years above their actual age grade for U16-U18 and Senior competitions, unless the player is part of a RUSA elite development program, and it is part of his/her development for future opportunities as an elite player.

## Masters (Crippled Crows)

43. Teams in the Masters Grade shall consist of players who are 35 years of age or over on the first day of January of the year of participation.
44. The Masters Grade shall be non-competition based on a draw of friendly matches. There shall be no scores recorded for the purposes of a competition ladder or a finals series.
45. Players in the Master's Grade shall adhere to the Laws of the Game as amended annually, and to any special RUSA By-Laws designed for this level of participation.
46. All players participating in the Masters Grade shall be required to be registered with their club prior to taking the field. No club shall permit an unregistered player to take the field and the Board, at its discretion, shall consider penalties against any offending teams ranging from fines to expulsion from the Masters Grade.
47. Subject to the agreement of both captains and the Referee, a Masters Grade match may commence with less than eleven (11) players on either side. Registered players from other teams in the Masters Grade may be borrowed by agreement to make up any shortfall in numbers.

## Playing Unregistered or Ineligible Players

48. A club playing a non-registered player, ineligible player or suspended player shall at the discretion of the Competition Manager be liable to the following penalties:
  - a. A reprimand issued to the offending team, and or;
  - b. the offending club shall incur a fine for each offending player, the amount of which shall be decided by the Competition Manager, and or;
  - c. The match shall be declared a forfeit win to the non-offending team. The offending team shall incur the forfeit.
  - d. Additional loss of competition points that may be rolled over to the following season, and or;
  - e. If both teams in a match play an unregistered or ineligible player, then the match shall be declared a forfeit loss to both teams.
  - f. Players deemed ineligible to participate in a match while serving a period of Judicial sanction, imposed either locally, interstate or overseas, shall be subject to investigation and additional sanction.

## Co-Joined Teams/ Players

49. Players registered in accordance with Rugby Australia protocol (via Rugby Xplorer) have the ability to play for a club other than the Club they first registered with in registration period, following the Rugby Xplorer approvals process.
50. Summary process is:
  - a. Player attempts registration for their 2nd Club/Competition
  - b. Player selects "Clearance Request" when attempting to register
  - c. Player, "From Club", "To Club" and "Association" will receive notification for clearance request
  - d. From Club and Association (RUSA) need to provide clearance in Rugby Xplorer Administration Portal
  - e. Once outcomes are determined, all are notified and player can then register for the "To Club"
  - f. Player will be visible and able to be selected for both Clubs

## Two Teams in the Same Age Grade/ Division

51. The finals eligibility of a player will be locked based on the majority of the games played as of Round 11.
52. Once selected for a team in a finals match (e.g. Semi Final), they must remain in that team for the duration of the final's series. They cannot change teams if one team drops out of the finals.

## Player Replacements

53. In accordance with World Rugby & RA directions for Domestic Rugby competitions, the number of rolling replacements (movements) permitted for each Grade of competition shall be as follows:
  - a. Premier and Reserve Grade 8 replacements
  - b. Thirds and Womens Competition 12 replacements
  - c. All Junior Competitions Unlimited
54. The replacements shall be in accordance with RA directions and shall be controlled through the No 4 Match Official or the Assistant Referee on the nominated sideline.
55. Managers are required to use the movement Cards numbered 1-8 or 1-12 as provided and applicable for the Grade involved.
56. Replacements due to blood injury, concussion or injury due to foul play do not count in the designated number of movements.
57. Law 3.27 i.e. Temporary Replacement – Head Injury Assessment (HIA), **DOES NOT APPLY AT ANY LEVEL.**

## Contested/ Uncontested Scrums

Refer to Appendix 5 for Playing Numbers in a Contested/ Uncontested Scrum

58. The provisions of discouragement of uncontested scrums shall apply to all senior grade competitions, and Juniors (U14s-U18s), excluding U12s.
59. There must be sufficient front row players in each squad to play at hooker, tight-head prop and loose head prop who are suitably trained and experienced to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement in any front row position is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.
60. If neither team has suitably trained front row players to start a game with contested scrums, the above arrangements do not apply to the game, even if qualified front row players subsequently become available.
61. Uncontested scrums shall be permitted as a safety requirement if before commencement and during the course of the game suitably trained and experienced front row players are not available. All clubs competing are expected to coach and prepare suitably trained front row players well in advance of the match.

62. If a team is required to nominate Uncontested Scrums, then that team must play with one fewer player than would otherwise be allowed (including team reductions as applied by Game On Rules).
63. Teams competing in Premier Grade Mens must commence their match with contested scrums. If a team is unable to commence their match with contested scrums, then that team will be recorded as forfeiting the match.
64. There is exemption (considered on a case-by-case basis) from the requirement to commence a match with contested scrums for the Reserve Grade Mens team, where the lowest Senior Mens Grade in the Club is Reserve Grade/ or separate entity club.

## Forfeits

65. A forfeit shall be awarded to the non-offending team if one team has less than eleven players or ten players in U12.
66. Any team not ready to commence a match fifteen (15) minutes after the scheduled KO time shall forfeit that match unless the Referee and both captains/and or coaches agree to waive this ruling. Such a forfeit shall be deemed a late forfeit and shall incur the resultant penalties as defined above.
67. Failure to field a team for any reason shall be regarded as a forfeit and may attract a fine for the forfeit, the amount of which shall be decided upon from time to time by the Competition Manager. The fine will not exceed \$400.
68. The forfeiting club shall be responsible to advise RUSA and the opposing team of the forfeit. This must be done by 8pm on the Thursday preceding a weekend match.
69. A forfeit with notice is defined as a written communication from the authorized officer of the club, which is received by RUSA before 8pm Thursday prior to the competition match.
70. A late forfeit is defined as any written or verbal notice, received or not received at all, after 8pm on the Thursday prior to the weekend match. A late forfeit shall include a team not turning up or having insufficient playing numbers on the day.
71. A club is required to forfeit their lowest grade team if they cannot field a team across all grades they are entered in.
72. In circumstances where a club has several open grades and the quality of player in its lowest grade is such that playing some of these players at a higher grade/standard would create an unreasonable risk to their safety then an exemption may be considered by RUSA, prior to the commencement of Round 4, to allow these players to remain in the lowest grade without penalty or the provisions of the forfeit being applied. The next lowest grade result would therefore be a forfeit.
73. If a club forfeits a team other than the lowest, then the result of any match played by the lowest team of the club on the same day shall also be taken as a forfeit (except in the case of a bye).
74. A two-point (-2) penalty shall be applied to any team that incurs a forfeit prior to Round 14.
75. A two-point (-2) penalty shall also be applied to any team that incurs a forfeit from Round 14 onward. Penalties relating to forfeits occurring from Round 14 onwards will be carried forward to the following season (2027) and applied to the team's competition points at the commencement of that season.
76. A forfeit shall not incur the points penalties outlined in Clauses 76 or 77 where a team provides verifiable medical documentation, such as a doctor's certificate, demonstrating that the team was unable to field a minimum starting players due to medical incapacity.
  - a. All medical documentation must be submitted to the Competition Manager for verification by COB on the first business day following the scheduled match.
77. A club team which forfeits three competition matches in the one season shall, at the discretion of the Competition Manager, be withdrawn from the competition including finals, effective at the time of the fourth forfeit. In this event or if a team withdraws from the competition - all points for, points against and competition points gained by all clubs that had previously played the withdrawn team shall be reviewed. If a complete draw of club fixtures has been played, i.e. all teams having played each other, forfeits included, then these points shall stand and be counted. An incomplete draw of fixtures (scored

points and competition points) shall NOT be counted for the competition table and the result against the withdrawn team will be recorded as a bye at the discretion of the Competition Manager.

78. If a team forfeits a game or has a bye, this match shall NOT count as matches played for the purposes of player and team suspension and for player eligibility for the finals. The team that does not forfeit may still enter a team list for the match.

## Byes

79. The calculation applied to the Competition Points in grades where there are an uneven number of BYEs between the competing teams.
80. The calculation can only be accurately applied following the completion of all minor round matches.
- The formula will be implemented in circumstances where there is a competition BYE (by design of the draw) and there are a different number of BYEs for teams in the season.
  - The output of the formula will only be applied to the BYEs in the season which exceed the number of BYEs all Clubs have (to ensure all Teams in that grade have an even number of Competition Matches).
  - The output of the formula will only be applied to the relevant BYEs after the season is complete (so an average for all For and Against points is included in the formula)
81. The formula is:
- Sum of “For” points across the season / Number of matches played in the season AND Sum of “Against” points across the season / Number of matches played in the season  
THEN  
The output from the above formulas is applied to the applicable BYE(s) and competition points applied as required
82. If the points “For” are an average total of 20 points or more, competition points will be applied including a bonus point (i.e., 4 tries or more)
83. RUSA will edit the Competition Ladder (where required) and notify impacted Clubs/Grades as soon as practicable following the culmination of the minor rounds.

## Duration of Matches

84. Match duration times permitted for each Grade (for XVs) are as follows:

GRADE	TIME ALLOCATION	GAME TIME
U4-7	40 MINUTES	15 MINUTE HALVES
U8	40 MINUTES	15 MINUTE HALVES
U10	50 MINUTES	20 MINUTE HALVES
U12	1 HOUR	25 MINUTE HALVES
U14	1 HOUR	25 MINUTE HALVES
U16	1 HOUR 10 MINUTES	30 MINUTE HALVES
U18	1 HOUR 20 MINUTES	35 MINUTE HALVES
WOMEN	1 HOUR 20 MINUTES	35 MINUTE HALVES
THIRDS	1 HOUR 20 MINUTES	35 MINUTE HALVES
RESERVES	1 HOUR 20 MINUTES	35 MINUTE HALVES
PREMIER	1 HOUR 30 MINUTES	40 MINUTE HALVES

85. The match times specified notwithstanding; each match must finish (5) five minutes before the listed start time of any subsequent match scheduled for the same ground. The Referee shall seek to ensure equal playing times for the halves.

86. Electronic match clocks on scoreboards should count up from 00:00, not down from 40:00. The referee is the sole judge of fact and law during a match, and shall keep the time. The electronic clock is simply a guide.

## Match Locations and Safety Provisions

87. The Competition Manager shall have the authority to alter match times and venues where necessary.
1. Requests for changes to match times and venues can be requested through Club Presidents, up to 8 days prior to scheduled game, and consideration will be given to the request based on
    - ii. Referee availability;
    - iii. Length of time given for the change, for all participants to be notified
88. The Competition Manager shall have the authority to alter the allocation of grounds if the allocated ground is deemed to be unfit for play or is unavailable.
1. Requests for changes to match times and venues can be requested through Club Presidents, up to 8 days prior to scheduled game, and consideration will be given to the request based on
    - ii. Referee availability;
    - iii. Availability of all participants to relocate.
89. Whereby a council, or appropriate authority, declares a ground unavailable or closed and unfit for use due to wet weather, ground hardness, or any other form of damage or risk, in the first instance the home club, in consultation with RUSA, should seek an alternate venue.
90. Subject to the mutual agreement between both clubs, an alternate venue/date/time for a fixture may be chosen. If mutual agreement cannot be met, the Competition Manager may choose an alternate venue/date/time. The Competition Manager's decision is final.
91. In the event that the match cannot be played within a reasonable timeframe or rescheduling will have a detrimental effect on the timing and conduct of the competition, the Competition Manager shall declare the match unplayable and both teams will receive two (2) competition points.
92. In the event that a match scheduling error occurred, or a match was deemed unplayable, the Competition Manager shall deem the match unplayable for both teams and two (2) competition points will be awarded to both teams.
93. If the Referee determines that a match in progress has to be abandoned prior to half time being indicated, then the match shall at the discretion of the Competition Manager be regarded as completed and declared a draw, with the score line recorded and competition points, including a bonus point for 4 tries scored, allocated accordingly.
94. If the Referee determines that a match in progress has to be abandoned at half time or after half time, at the discretion of the Competition Manager then the match shall be regarded as completed and the team with the higher score at that time declared the winner, with the score line recorded and competition points, including bonus points, allocated accordingly.
95. There shall be no light meters or other measurements or appeals accepted in such cases against the decision to stop or abandon play by a Referee. The Referee shall be the sole judge of fact in accordance with Law 5.7 (d) of the Laws of the Game of Rugby Union.

## Mercy Rule (Juniors)

96. If the difference in score between two sides competing in the Under 12s to Under 18s between 60-66 points, then the Referee shall stop the game and declare the match completed, irrespective of normal time remaining.
97. If sufficient time remains before the commencement of the next fixture, both team coaches shall liaise with the Referee to arrange to continue playing a friendly game with a more even playing environment.
98. For recording purposes, the match shall be declared a victory to the winning team with the appropriate competition and scoring points awarded to both teams based on the completed score.
99. Coaches, in conjunction with the Referee, shall be expected to encourage the development and enjoyment of the game for all participants by co-operating on such "friendly" initiatives.
100. The Referee shall be required to report to RUSA any incidences of junior club officials not cooperating to offer such opportunities of enjoyment and participation to players. In such cases RUSA shall investigate and ask the clubs to report on the matter and its proposed course of action. Competition points may be deducting for teams repeatedly brining the mercy rule into disrepute.

## Penalties and Appeals (Other than Judicial)

101. RUSA Board may from time-to-time delegate to the Competition Manager, fixed penalties to be applied for non-compliance with these Rules.
102. Any penalties imposed by the Competition Manager shall be communicated to both parties affected.
103. A decision may be appealed in writing within seven (7) days of notification by the Competition Manager by either party or club affected by the decision. The Board may, in its absolute discretion, vary such penalties in any manner that it deems fit, including the increase of such penalty. Any appeal from a club shall set out the material facts upon which the club relies in support of the appeal and the Board shall consider the penalty afresh.
104. RUSA Board may expressly extend or vary the time as required within the rules.

## Yellow Cards

105. When a player under the open Laws of the Game is cautioned (yellow card) and therefore subject to temporary suspension for the period required under the Laws of the Game they shall be required to report to the nominated No 4 Match Official next to the "Sin Bin" area at the center-field position on the nominated line of touch.
106. In the absence of a nominated No 4 Match Official the Manager or Ground Marshal shall supervise the Sin Bin area. A designated club trainer may attend him for the purpose of supplying fluids and/or warm apparel. No other contact shall be made with the suspended player by team players or team management.
107. A player's yellow card tally carries on throughout the regular season AND finals series. Their yellow card count does not reset once the finals series commences.
108. Match sanctions for a player receiving three yellow cards across multiple games whether for technical infringement or foul play, or a combination of both, shall be an automatic one-match suspension from the next available match as determined by the Rugby Services Manager without attendance at a Judicial Hearing.

## Rugby Union SA Finals Series

109. For all Junior and Senior grade, finals series will be communicated at the start of the season and will be determined on an annual basis by RUSA and the Competition Manager. This format will be promulgated to Members as soon as reasonably practicable. In a general sense, the finals format will follow below (Subject to Competition Manager discretion):

ASSOCIATION	FINALS FORMAT	
Juniors	Week 1: SF1: 1v4	SF 2: 2v3
	Week 2: Grand Finals	
Seniors	Week 1: PF1: 1v2	EF: 3v4
	Week 2: SF Loser 1v2 v Winner 3v4	
	Week 3: Grand Finals	

110. In the event that the scores of participating teams in the Grade Semifinal matches are a draw at the completion of the allotted time, then the Referee shall play extra time.
111. Following a break of two minutes the Referee shall order the teams to change ends from the completion of normal time and shall play an additional period of extra time. This shall be comprised of a maximum of ten (10) minutes to be played, being 5-minute halves. There shall be a half time break of two minutes followed by the teams changing ends.
112. The extra period played is on the basis of the first team to score in this period wins the match and there is no further time played. The Referee shall declare the match completed.
113. Players substituted from the field of play during the period of normal time allotted shall be permitted to return to the match for the extra period of play.

114. Players replaced because of injury (other than the blood bin rule) or sent off (Red Card) under the provisions of the Laws of the Game during the normal period of time shall not be permitted to return to the match for the extra period of play.
115. Players who have been temporarily suspended by yellow card (sin bin for 10 minutes) during the normal period of time and who, at the completion of normal time, have not completed the period of temporary suspension shall be deemed in suspension for the extra period of time required to complete the suspension.
116. In the event that the scores of participating teams remain equal at the completion of extra time the Team which finished the home and away rounds in the higher position on the competition table shall proceed to the next match in the final's series.

## Finals Series Eligibility

Refer to Appendix 6 for Finals Dispensations Form

117. Players must be registered with a minimum of 5 competition matches remaining in the current season and is an active player on Rugby Xplorer during the entire final's series.
- For clarity, players must be registered by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2026
118. A player qualifies for a specific team if they play at least 33% of home and away competition matches in that grade or a lower standard,
- For a grade with 18 games, a player must have competed in 6 games.
  - For a grade with 16 games, a player must have competed in 5.3 games, which is rounded to 5.
119. An injury, sickness, interstate/overseas work-related absence, or any other extenuating circumstances has prevented the player from playing a sufficient number of competitions matches to normally qualify. In all such cases proof of circumstances shall be required (e.g. letter from Employer or a Doctor's Certificate or similar) for an exemption to be granted by the Competition Manager. The letter must contain the dates in which the player missed playing. The player must be a registered player for their club during the time these circumstances prevented the player from taking the field. For the avoidance of doubt, a 'Training Only Participant' shall not be counted as a registered player. If RUSA approve the eligibility of the player on grounds of sickness or injury, they will be required to play in the grade that they played the majority of games in.
120. Eligibility Report will be generated through Rugby Xplorers Competition Report "Player & Team Official History"
- P = player selected in the starting team list,
  - R = selected as a reserve in the starting team list,
  - S = substitution movement added against the player in the Rugby Match Day app,
121. Once a player plays 50% of the season in a specific grade, they are qualified for that grade. No other finals eligibility is permitted.
122. If a player qualifies for Premier Grade having games counted towards 50% of the season, they will not be eligible to qualify for Reserve Grade.
123. An exception to this is if a club has consecutive teams in finals on the same day (e.g.: Premier Grade and Reserve Grade) and the club shows selection integrity by the player in question not being selected in the starting 15 in the higher grade and therefore falls into the lower grade. The higher grade must have a starting 15 listed for integrity to be shown. Selection integrity must be evident at the discretion of the Competition Manager for this to apply.
124. If a player is selected for the lower grade under selection integrity, the player must only be selected on the bench in the higher grade.
125. Selection integrity does not carry over from one week of finals to the next. Selection integrity must be shown for each round of finals. Once a team no longer has consecutive teams playing in the same round of finals, selection integrity cannot be applied.
126. If a player is listed as starting in several grades, the highest grade they were listed in will be counted for that round.

127. If a player is listed on the bench for several grades, the highest grade they were listed as participating in will be counted for that round.
128. If a player is listed as starting in a lower grade, and listed on the bench in a higher grade, the lower grade will count towards eligibility.
129. If a player is listed on the bench in a lower grade, and listed as starting in a higher grade, the higher grade will count towards eligibility.
130. Rugby Xplorer system will be used to determine the number of matches played by an individual.
131. Players will receive eligibility for one match only per competition round and that eligibility will be attributed to the highest grade that player started in that round.
132. Acting as a replacement due to injury of a player playing in a higher Grade shall not count as a match in that Grade if a match has already been played in a lower Grade.
133. Byes do not count towards eligibility unless, in extenuating circumstances, an uneven number of byes in a competition causes a disadvantage to a club and its player seeking eligibility.
134. Forfeits awarded to shall count towards eligibility provided a team list for the match is submitted by the normal time and shows a similar selection pattern as in previous matches at that grade.
135. Forfeits awarded against do not count towards eligibility.
136. The bye will not count as a competition match.

### **Finals Series Communication**

137. All clubs competing in finals in both Juniors and Seniors grades will receive an 'Eligibility Spreadsheet'. This will include a breakdown of all players eligible for finals and the grade which they are eligible for.
138. All Clubs must submit their eligible team of 23 via Rugby Xplorer, selected from the 'Eligibility Spreadsheet' by Friday 3pm, prior to the weekend's fixture.
139. Failure to submit a team sheet by this date may result in finals eligibility requests being unable to be considered and/or granted.
140. Clubs may make their last changes to their submitted team via Rugby Xplorer and communicate any changes 1 hour before kick-off.

## Timeline Summary

The following timelines apply to all affiliated clubs, teams, match officials, and participants involved in Rugby Union South Australia (RUSA) competitions. Compliance with these deadlines is mandatory. Failure to adhere to the timelines outlined below may result in penalties, loss of eligibility, or other sanctions as determined by RUSA.

### 1. Annual Deadlines

- 28 February – Club jersey designs must be submitted to RUSA for approval.
- 21 March – Dispensations processed by RUSA Staff (Prior to Round 1).
- 2 May – Dispensations processed by RUSA Staff (Round 5).
- 30 May – Final dispensations processed by RUSA Staff (Round 9).
- 30 June – Final day for players to hold an active registration in South Australia in order to qualify for finals.
- 20 July – For extreme/special circumstances for Finals Eligibility
- 27 July - For injury or illness dispensation request for Finals Eligibility
- 5 August – Final eligibility determinations for players seeking consideration under extenuating circumstances.

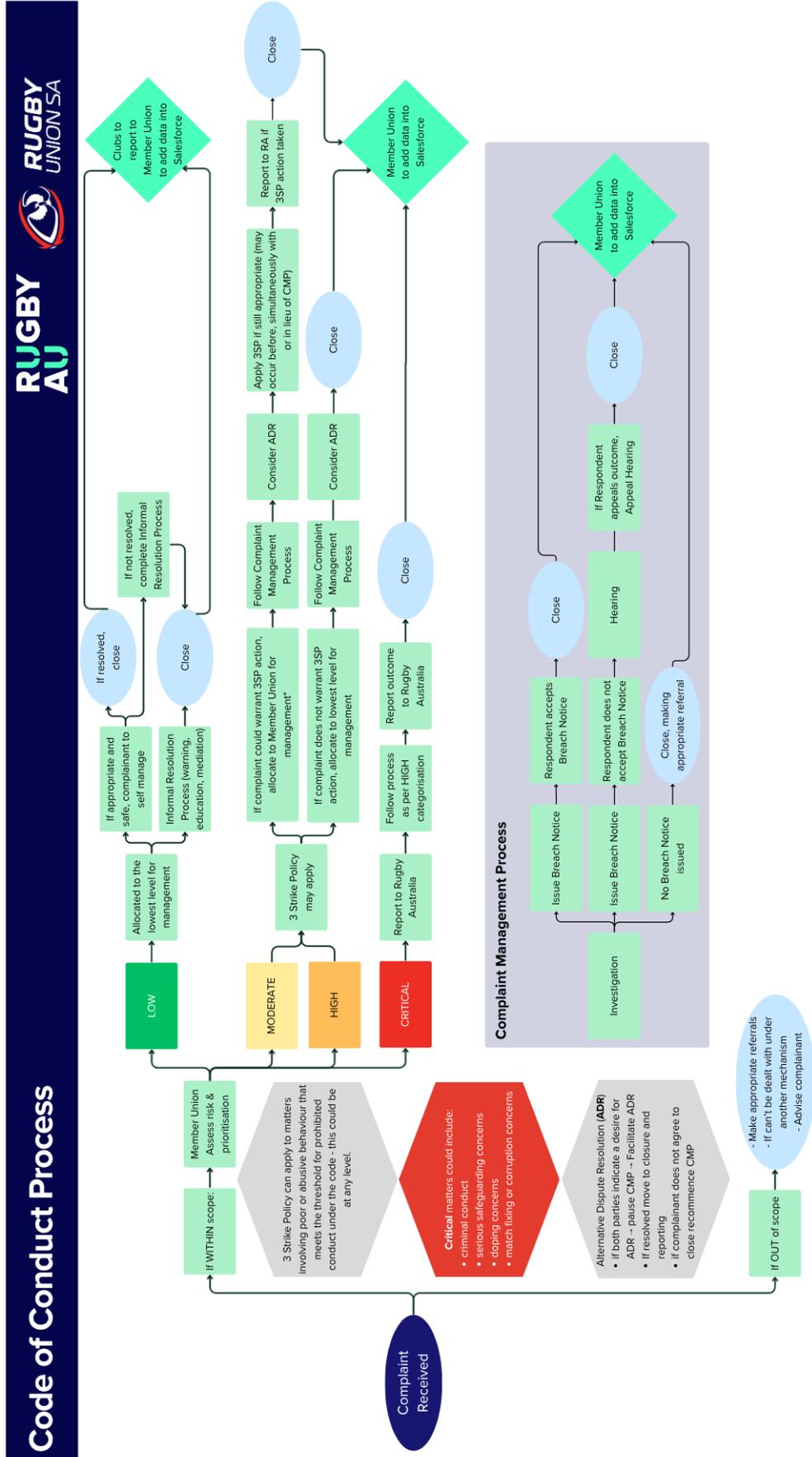
### 2. Weekly Operational Deadlines

- Forfeits – Clubs must advise RUSA of any forfeits no later than 8:00pm on the Thursday preceding the scheduled match.
- Citations – Citations must be lodged by 12:00pm (midday) on the first Business Day following the alleged incident.
- Domestic Clearances – Domestic clearance requests must be submitted by 3:00pm on the Friday preceding match commencement.
- Referee Allocations – The Referees Association will advise Clubs of any 'Club to Appoint' refereeing requirements by 3:00pm on the Thursday preceding scheduled competition games.
- Team Lists – Team lists must be entered in Rugby Xplorer no later than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled kick-off time.
- Match Closure – All games must be closed in Rugby Xplorer, including team lists, scoring, and statistics, within 10 minutes of match completion.

### 3. Other Administrative Deadlines

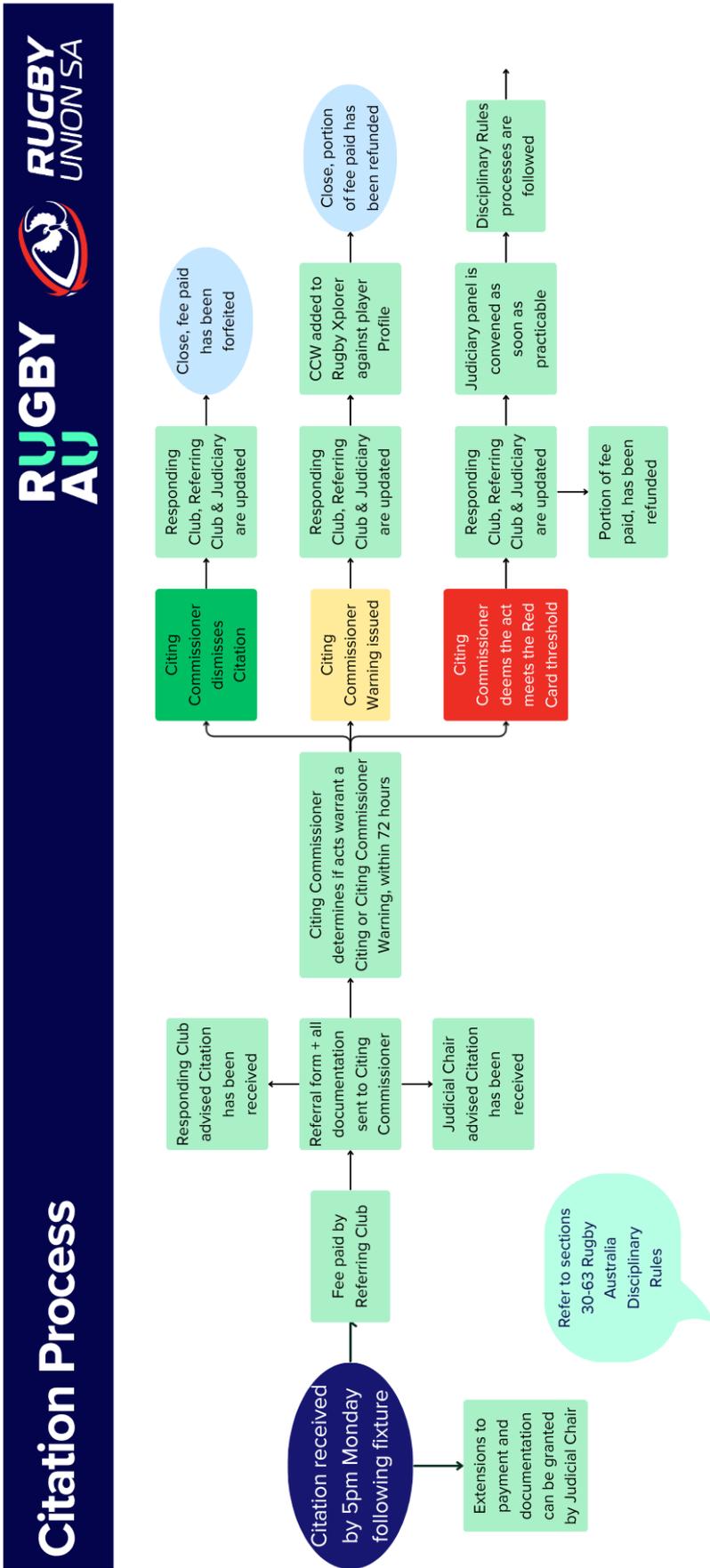
- Time or Ground Location Changes - Requests to change game time or venue must be submitted no less than 8 days prior to the scheduled match.
- Finals Team Sheets - Finals team sheets must be submitted by 3:00pm on the Friday prior to the weekend's scheduled finals fixture.

# Appendix 1 – Code of Conduct Flow Chart





# Appendix 3 – Citation Flow Chart



## Appendix 4 – Citation Referral Form

MATCH DETAILS			
Date:		KO Time:	
Teams:	vs		Grade:

DETAILS OF ALLEGED OFFENDING PLAYER			
Name:		Club/Team:	
Position:		Jersey Number:	

DESCRIPTION OF INCIDENT	
Describe what occurred in detail (include time of incident):	
Name of alleged victim player(s):	
Injuries sustained (if any):	
Detected by Match Officials? If so, what action was taken?	
Any other information (i.e. evidence to be provided)	

DETAILS OF CLUB OFFICIAL SUBMITTING THIS FORM			
Name:		Email:	
Club:		Phone:	
Signature:		Date of Submission:	

DETAILS OF WITNESS(ES) TO THE INCIDENT			
Name:		Email:	
Club:		Phone:	

WHAT TO DO WITH THIS DOCUMENT
The Club Official submitting this Citing Complaint Referral is required to <b>complete</b> this document for each incident, and <b>submit</b> to the Union by 5:00pm on the first business day following the alleged incident via <b>email</b> to <a href="mailto:info@sa.rugby">info@sa.rugby</a>
<b>All Citing Complaint Referrals must be accompanied by a payment of \$200 due at the time of submission. Invoices are not generated for Citation Fees.</b>

## Appendix 5 – Playing Numbers in a Contested Scrum

### Senior Grades

When a team on the pitch is reduced to fewer than 15 for any reason, then the number of players in each team in the scrum may be similarly reduced.

Where a permitted reduction is made by one team, there is no requirement for the other team to make a similar reduction. However, a team must not have fewer than five (5) players in the scrum (3 x front row and 2 x second row).

### Junior Grades (U12 to U18)

When a team on the pitch is reduced to fewer than 15 for any reason, the number of players in each team in the scrum may be similarly reduced.

Where a permitted reduction is made in the scrum by one team, the other team must reduce their scrum accordingly, down to a minimum of five (5)

Where there is an incomplete scrum, it must be formed as follows:

- 10 players = 5 in the scrum = 3-2 formation (i.e. no flankers or #8)
- 11 players = 5 in the scrum = 3-2 formation (i.e. no flankers or #8)
- 12 players = 6 in the scrum = 3-2-1 formation (i.e. no flankers)
- 13 players = 7 in the scrum = 3-4 formation (i.e. no #8)

## Appendix 5 – Uncontested Scrums

Uncontested scrums as a result of a sending off, temporary suspension or injury must be played with eight players in the scrum.

Uncontested scrums as a result of not having a suitably trained front row and there are insufficient numbers to play 15 players may result in players in the scrum as follows:

- 14 or more players = 8 in the scrum
- 13 players = 7 in the scrum
- 12 players = 6 in the scrum
- 11 players or less = 5 in the scrum

If neither team has suitably trained front row players to start a game with contested scrums, the action described above do not apply to the game, even if qualified front rowers subsequently become available.

Appendix 5 for Finals Dispensation Form

DETAILS OF PERSON SUBMITTING THIS FORM						
Name:				Email:		
Club:				Phone:		
Position:		Signature:			Date of Submission:	/ /

DETAILS OF PLAYER				
Name:			MyRugbyID:	
Grade:			Phone:	
Dispensation Requested for: (circle one)	Injury / Illness / Extreme + Special Circumstances			
Number of Games Missed:		Specific Rounds seeking dispensation approval for:		

**FURTHER DETAILS FOR DISPENSATION REQUEST**

Please attach any supporting documentation signed by a qualified medical professional who monitored the player during their injury/illness. Any application without supporting documentation will not be accepted.

The person submitting this dispensation request form is required to **Complete** this document and **Submit (with supporting documentation)** to RUSA:

- For injury or illness dispensation request - by **COB Monday, 19 days before Finals Commence**
- For extreme/special circumstances – by **COB Monday, 26 days before Finals Commence**

(Any extension to the dispensation request may granted in the absolute discretion of the Finals Eligibility Committee).

Submit this form via **email to [info@sa.rugby](mailto:info@sa.rugby)**. Should you have any queries regarding this document, please contact SA Rugby Union on (08) 7070 6940.