



RUGBY
UNION SA

Rugby Union South Australia

Competition Rules

2023

Prepared by: Pete Garden – Regional Development Manager
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Prepared by: Chris Graham – Operations Manager
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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 Player, match official, selector, coach, trainer, manager, team official, or an individual involved in the organisation, administration or promotion of Rugby including a director, officer or employee of a Rugby Body.

“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.

“Regulation(s)” means the World Rugby and Rugby Australia Regulations, as amended from time to time.

“Rugby” means rugby union football.

“Rugby Australia” or “Rugby AU” means Rugby Australia Ltd.

“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

1 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:

- (a) [Principles of the Game](#)
- (b) [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

2 LAWS OF THE GAME

All games will be played in terms of the [WR Laws of the Game](#), including any of the following variations:

- 2.1 [Under 19 Variations](#)
 - (a) [Rugby AU Under 19 Variations](#)
- 2.2 [Rugby AU Kids Pathway U6 to U12](#)
- 2.3 [10-a-side Variations](#)
- 2.4 [7-a-side Variations](#)
- 2.5 [Rugby AU Touch 7s Laws](#)
- 2.6 [Rugby AU Veteran Rugby Laws](#)

Governance of the Competition

3 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.

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

Rugby AU Codes and Policies

4 RUGBY AUSTRALIA CODES AND POLICIES

The effective governance and administration of rugby requires 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](#):

4.1 [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.

- (a) Concussion Management;
- (b) Serious Injuries and Injury Reporting;
- (c) Welfare Initiatives;
- (d) Player Dispensation;
- (e) Match Day Safety; and
- (f) First Aid medical.

4.2 [Child Safety](#)

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

- (a) Child Safe Commitment Statement;
- (b) Child Safeguarding Policy;
- (c) Resources
- (d) Reporting
- (e) Working with Children Checks.

4.3 [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:

- (a) *Australian Rugby Disciplinary Rules* - these have been developed to ensure a consistent approach to foul play, citing and judicial hearings;
- (b) *Anti-Doping Code* - all participants are bound by the Anti-Doping Code and must be aware of the requirements;
- (c) *Sports Supplement Policy*;
- (d) *Illicit Drugs Policy*
- (e) *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;
- (f) *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;
- (g) *Member Protection Policy* – ensures that all Participants feel included and safe in rugby; and
- (h) *Anti-Corruption and Betting Policy* – applies to all Participants and they need to be aware of its requirements.

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

- (a) Inclusion Policy;
- (b) Safety and Participation Policy;
- (c) Registration Regulations;
- (d) Registration Terms and Conditions; and
- (e) Smart Rugby Policy.
- (f) [Rugby AU Social Media Policy](#)

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

RUSA Policies and Procedures

5 RUSA POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Matches played in South Australia under the auspices of RUSA shall also comply with these Policies and Procedures.

5.1 Access

The [RUSA Policies and Procedures](#) (for all RUSA Competition Grades) can be accessed from the RUSA website by clicking the link or following these steps:

1. Visit sa.rugby
2. Hover over the “Administration” menu option across the top of the screen
3. Select “RUSA Policies” from the available menu

5.2 Available RUSA Policies

The RUSA Policies and Procedures which are available online are listed below. This may be amended and updated as required from time to time

1. Citing Complaint Referral Procedure and Form
2. Coach Policy
3. Competition Points Calculation for Uneven BYEs
4. Conduct of the Finals Series
5. Contested & Uncontested Scrums Policy
6. Finals Eligibility Policy and Dispensation Request Form
7. Game On Rules 2022
8. Ground Marshal Policy
9. Hot Weather Policy
10. Match Abandonment Policy and Procedure
11. Match Day Facilities Preparation Procedure
12. Match Official Appointments Policy
13. Match Official Dissent and Abuse
14. Match Photographer Policy
15. Match Results Notification Procedure
16. Mercy Rule – Junior Competition
17. Player Numbers and Contested & Uncontested Scrums Policy
18. Representative Players Policy
19. SA Laws Summary reference document
20. SA Member Protection Document
21. Team Forfeit Procedure

National 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.

6 NATIONAL STANDARD COMPETITION RULES

6.1 Registration and Match Day – Rugby Xplorer

- (a) It is a requirement of Rugby Australia that all Players, Non-Playing Members and Match Officials are 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.

6.2 Draw

The Competition will be conducted in accordance with a schedule matches drawn up by the Management Committee prior to the start of the playing season and varied as necessary from time to time.

Where possible, all matches in all competitions are to be played in an ascending order i.e. lowest to highest.

In the event of matches in the same round being played on different days the selection of players should be the same as if all matches in the same round were being played on the same day.

6.3 Match Team Lists, Scoring and Stats

- (a) *Refer to the **Match Results Notification Procedure** for further details.*
- (b) It is the responsibility of both teams to ensure that:
 - (i) All players and team officials (where required by the Competition) 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) The match day scoring and stats must be entered by EACH team manager for their OWN team. Where required for a match, teams may agree to have ONE team manager score and enter stats for BOTH teams;
 - (v) 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 recording and submitting their scorecard to RUSA; and
 - (vi) All clubs must enter the team list, scoring and stats of all matches online via the Match Day App by no later than 5:30pm Saturday, so match results can be published in Sunday newspapers. Any matches entered after 5:30pm Saturday must be completed by 9am of the following Monday, and will not appear in the Sunday newspapers.
- (c) Information entered must include:
 - (i) All players' details;
 - (ii) Team Officials' details (Coach, Manager and Ground Marshal);
 - (iii) Result of the match;
 - (iv) Point scorers;
 - (v) Tries;
 - (vi) Conversions;
 - (vii) Penalties;
 - (viii) Drop Goals;
 - (ix) Penalty tries;
 - (x) All players temporarily suspended (yellow card);
 - (xi) All players sent from the field of play (red card);
 - (xii) Players who have a suspected concussion (blue card).
 - (xiii) Player's movements for injury (blood or otherwise) or tactical reasons.

- (d) Players selected for Premier Grade Mens or Womens must have their Rugby Xplorer profile set to allow their name to appear on Team Sheets (i.e. cannot be listed as “Name Withheld”).

PLEASE NOTE: Clubs failing to follow the procedures are liable to receive penalties in relation to Competition points, and/or other penalty as determined by the Management Committee.

6.4 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.

6.5 Ladder Positions

- (a) *Refer to **the Mercy Rule – Junior Competition Policy** for more information.*
- (b) 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 (i) to (iv) above are 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.

NB 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. Refer to the **RUSA Competition Points Calculation for Uneven BYEs procedure** for further details.

NB 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 6.5(b)(ii) – (vi) will be provided an additional Competition Point in Rugby Xplorer so the finishing positions in the public ladder are accurate.

6.6 Forfeits

- (a) *Any Club intending to forfeit a Match must do so in accordance with the **RUSA Team Forfeit Procedure**.*

- (b) **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.
- (c) 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 2023 season is for the Adelaide University Sharks, Brighton Black Team & ADF Team (playing as a second Adelaide University Team, Brighton 3rd Grade Team and Independent Club), who do not need to forfeit their match in Third Grade in the event that Brighton Reserve Grade are required to forfeit.
- (d) There will be no refund of player registration fees from RUSA or Rugby Australia in the case of forfeited matches.
- (e) 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.
- (f) 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.
- (g) The Management Committee 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 Management Committee.
- (h) There will be no refund of player registration fees from RUSA or Rugby Australia for players of a team withdrawing from a Competition.

6.7 Postponed / Abandoned Matches

- (a) Refer to the ***RUSA Match Abandonment Policy & Procedure*** for further details.
- (b) 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 Management Committee, after consultation with the clubs involved, shall direct how the abandoned match will be dealt with.
- (c) 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:
 1. 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.
 2. 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.
- (d) 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 Management Committee shall determine if any penalties will be imposed on the competing teams and/or Clubs.

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.

6.8 Playing Field

- (a) Refer to the ***RUSA Match Day Facilities Preparation Procedure*** for further details.

- (b) Refer to the **Match Abandonment Policy and Procedure** for further details.
- (c) Clubs hosting matches played under these rules shall comply with the [RA Medical and First Aid Requirements](#)
- (d) 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.
- (e) 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.
- (f) Goal Posts - All Goal posts within the playing enclosure must be padded.
- (g) Playing Enclosure
 1. 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.
 2. Persons authorised to enter the Playing Enclosure ("authorised persons") are as follows:
 - Medically Qualified Persons/Sports Trainer – maximum two per team
 - The Teams
 - Referee
 - Assistant Referees (two)
 - No. 4 and No. 5
 - Water carriers – maximum two per team (three allowed in 7s)
 - A maximum of 4 ball persons

NB All personnel inside the playing enclosure are subject to the direction and potential sanctioning of the Match Officials.

6.9 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.
- (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.

6.10 Schedule of Penalties

- (a) A breach of any of the Competition Rules may include any or all of the following:
 1. Warning;
 2. Loss of Competition points;
 3. Issue of a *Show Cause Notice*;
 4. Monetary Fine; and
 5. Expulsion from the Competition.

6.11 Protests

- (a) Protests against the Competition Rules
 - (i) All protests regarding these Competition Rules must be made in writing and signed by either the club President or club Secretary;
 - (ii) 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;
 - (iii) All protests must specify the particular Competition Rule that has been allegedly breached;
 - (iv) All witness statements must be signed;

- (v) 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.
 - (vi) 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 Management Committee the penalties that should be imposed. The Management Committee shall make the final determination in this regard.
 - (vii) 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
- (i) All protests must be made in writing and signed by either the club President or club Secretary;
 - (ii) 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;
 - (iii) All protests must specify the particulars of the decision to be protested;
 - (iv) All witness statements must be signed;
 - (v) 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;
 - (vi) 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.

6.12 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.

6.13 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

7 LAW AND REGULATION CLARIFICATIONS

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

Rolling Replacements - World Rugby Law 3.34 is mandatory across all domestic rugby played in Australia:

- (a) Unlimited rolling replacements applies to all rugby aged U18 and below;
- (b) Rolling replacements, with a maximum of 12 movements applies to Senior Women and Third Grade;
- (c) Rolling replacements, with a maximum of 8 movements applies to Reserve Grade and Premier Grade.

Replacements due to blood injury, concussion or injury due to foul play do not count in the designated number of movements.

Law 3.27 i.e. Temporary Replacement – Head Injury Assessment (HIA), **DOES NOT APPLY AT ANY LEVEL.**

7.2 Uncontested Scrums

- (a) *Refer to the **RUSA Contested & Uncontested Scrums Policy** for further details*
- (b) 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:
 - (i) Law 3.13 – 3.20 (inclusive), but excluding Law 3.17
- (c) 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.

7.3 Regulation 4 – Player Status, Player Contracts and Player Movement

(a) International Clearance

The International Player Clearances Policy within Rugby is set out in WR Regulation 4.6.1 and provides:

1. 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.
2. Therefore, Players wishing to play within another International Union are required to complete the Rugby Australia [International Clearance Form](#).
3. 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.

NB 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 penalty per 6.10.

(b) Domestic Clearance

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.

(c) Local Clearance in South Australia

(i) Club to Club (including for Co-Joined teams)

*Refer to the **RUSA Finals Eligibility Policy** for further details*

A player wanting to be "cleared" to play for another Club in the South Australian competitions must follow Rugby Xplorer clearance process. When a player has their clearance approved (and they have completed registration for the second Club), they will remain visible by **both** clubs for the duration of the registration period.

(ii) Junior Association to Senior Association

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.