



Suomen Rugbyliitto
Competition regulations 2018

Foreword

These rules and regulations have been written to be as comprehensible as possible, but with comparatively years of collective experience in managing the sport of rugby within Finland – and due to ongoing growth and development - it is inevitable that situations will arise that are not covered by the precise wording of this document. Where possible, solutions to these events should be inferred from the existing rules and regulations as outlined and/or by common practice. It is also important to remember that SRL is a member of World Rugby and that World Rugby regulations may also apply to domestic Finnish governance.

It is hoped that following these rules and regulations will give Finnish rugby the balance it needs between development and growth of rugby up and down the country on one hand, and the need for well-governed competition on the other.

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1 Administrative

1.1 Acts contrary to the spirit of the game

All parties involved in Finnish rugby shall adhere to the spirit and values of the sport in their actions and behaviour, on and off the rugby field and at any time where they may be construed as representing- or being associated with rugby in Finland. Any individual or organisation deemed to have breached this general code of conduct or who has been found to have brought the game into disrepute may be subject to sanction by SRL. There is no maximum sanction.

1.2 Use of banned substances

By their participation in SRL-sanctioned competition, all club members agree to commit to follow both the Finnish Anti-Doping Code and World Rugby Anti-Doping Regulations. Clubs accept that the Finnish Anti-Doping Agency has full rights to perform doping tests in SRL-sanctioned competitions and that competition bans based on the guidelines of the aforementioned bodies may be imposed on those found to have breached these anti-doping codes.

1.3 Team eligibility

To enter an SRL teams must be members of SRL, or otherwise have explicit permission from SRL to enter the competition. Combined teams, consisting of representatives of one or more club, may enter SRL competitions provided that they have explicit permission to do so from the NLCM. In such cases, the name of the team must be such that it is clearly differentiated from any single existing club.

1.4 Player eligibility

1.4.1 Licenses and insurance

All players fielded in any SRL competition must be fully licensed and insured for the match in question. By entering the field of play, a player acknowledges that they have a

valid license and the required level of insurance. By naming a player on the match report card, a club acknowledges that they have checked and validated this claim. Any player or club unclear of what constitutes a valid license or necessary level of insurance should contact the SRL General Secretary. SRL, members of the SRL board, the NLCM or match officials cannot be held accountable for any legal or medical repercussions if a player and/or club disregard this regulation.

1.4.2 Representation of a club

Unless otherwise stated in this document, unless explicit permission has been granted by the NLCM, a club may only field players licensed to them in SRL competition. If a player wishes to change their club after already purchasing a license they may send a request to the NLCM to have their license transferred. Such requests will only be granted where a valid need for the transfer can be shown (i.e. the player has moved city, as opposed to simply desiring to play for a new team or the player is transferring teams between seasons). In situations where a player holds two valid licenses, the license that was first purchased will be considered the sole valid license until its expiry.

Players that are registered to an SRL-registered club with no XV's team competing in competitions covered by these regulations, may also represent a XV's club to which they are not registered. Any player making use of this exemption will be considered 'registered' to the first XV's club they play for during the season and may therefore not represent another XV's side unless permitted to do so under the respective competition regulations outlined in this document.

1.4.3 Age restrictions

A player is considered adult on their 18th birthday. An adult may play senior rugby without restriction in SRL competitions. Male players who have reached their 17th birthday may play with adults provided that they are considered competent to do so by their club and the club has obtained expressed written permission from the player's parents or guardian for them to participate. For women, players that have reached their 16th birthday may also play with adults provided that they are considered competent to

do so by their club, the relevant club coach has provided a written summary of the player that clearly highlights their ability to play senior rugby, and the club has obtained expressed written permission from the player's parents or guardian for them to participate.

A player who has not reached their 18th birthday (male or female) may not play or train in the front row of the scrum, regardless of any permissions granted (including those construed to originate from the SRL).

No players of an age below those outlined above may play senior rugby, regardless of any other mitigating circumstances. In all cases where documentation is necessary it is the responsibility of the player's club to organise, collect, and archive such paperwork.

1.4.4 Investigation of eligibility

Any request that the SRL check a player's eligibility may only be submitted by the club in opposition or one of the match officials. This must be done via email. Such a request to investigate eligibility must be sent to the NLCM by 2359 of the day in which the match was played and must clearly be referring to specific player(s). No sanctions beneficial to the non-offending team will be imposed if this process has not been followed.

In addition to the above, SRL reserves the right to independently check, randomly or otherwise, the eligibility of all players involved in a game at any time and to impose the relevant sanctions after the fact if clubs or players are subsequently found to be in breach.

1.4.5 Result of fielding an ineligible player

In the event that a club is found to have fielded a non-eligible player after-the-fact (provided that the procedure outlined above has been followed) then the final score will be nullified if the offending team won or drew the match and the result will be recorded as a forfeit-win for the non-offending team. If the non-offending team won the match

then the final score will stand, although the offending team will be stripped of any bonus points. No additional bonus points will be awarded to the non-offending team.

1.5 Club responsibility

1.5.1 Responsibility of the home team

1.5.1.1 The pitch

The home club is responsible for reserving a pitch that adheres to the standards set by World Rugby or one that has either been previously accepted by the SRL or is acceptable to the opposing team and the match referee (provided it is safe to play on). Any disputes should be settled by the match referee or the NLCM. If the pitch does not meet these requirements then the home team will forfeit the match.

1.5.1.2 Informing the visitors

The home club is responsible for informing the visiting team and the match referee of the time and place of the match at least three days prior to the day of the match. If such a declaration is not made and the visiting team is unable to contact their hosts after reasonable efforts to do so, then the visiting team will be entitled to request that the NLCM award a forfeit.

1.5.1.3 Match referee

In the event that a match referee has not been appointed by FRRA then it is the responsibility of the home club to provide a referee (as long as they have been advised of the lack of appointment at least 48 hours before kick-off). Such a referee may be a member of either club. If the home team is unable to appoint a referee then they will be considered to have forfeited the match.

In the event that a match does not have an appointed match official then the home club shall also be responsible for collecting the relevant sections of the report card and for forwarding them to the relevant parties. The home club will also be required to inform

the NLCM of the score, number of tries scored by both teams, and of any yellow or red cards immediately following the end of the game.

1.5.2 Responsibility of both teams

1.5.2.1 Cancellation/Postponement/Delay

If a team is unable to fulfill a fixture then they must notify their opposition, all appointed match officials and the NLCM as soon as possible. If a team does not turn up for a scheduled match or does not notify their opponents or all match officials of cancellation within two days of kick-off (by 2359 on Thursday if the game is to be played on Saturday), the said club will be responsible for incurring the costs of the opposing team and officials (on top of any referee fees already paid). Such costs include, but are not limited to, pitch reservation and direct travelling costs.

If a team is unable to arrive in time for the scheduled kick-off due to factors outside of their control (as adjudged by the NLCM) then there is no forfeit provided that they contact the opposing team once the delay is realised, give the reason for the delay, and keep them informed of their estimated time of arrival. If possible, the game should be played after the delayed teams' arrival, otherwise a replay will be organised on a date mutually agreed by both teams. If the teams cannot agree on a date then one will be set by the NLCM.

In addition, any side that cancels or postpones a XV-a-side match after a set date (this will be announced each season, although May 1st has been typical) will be liable to pay a fee to FRRA. This fee per cancelled match is €250 for all Championship sides (male and female), €250 for all male Division 1 sides and €100 for all female Division 1 sides and male Division 2 sides.

1.5.2.2 The Match Report Card

Each club will be responsible for completing their team's section of the match report card and delivering it to the match referee at least five minutes before kick-off. Failure to

do so will result in the kick-off being delayed and, when kick-off does occur, the non-offending team will be awarded a penalty on the halfway mark. If the report card has not been provided ten minutes after the scheduled kick-off then the non-offending team will be entitled to claim a forfeit if they choose to do so.

Teams must also have clearly noted their front-row and front-row replacement players, and, if player(s) have been borrowed from other clubs (where permissible), these must be clearly indicated and have been signed-off by a representative of the opposing team to indicate their consent in allowing said player(s) to be fielded.

1.6 Disciplinary matters

World Rugby Regulation 17, as updated from time to time, sets out the applicable SRL Disciplinary Regulations for Foul Play in relation to any competition within the SRL's jurisdiction and any Additional Matches, subject to any permitted modifications set out below. World Rugby Regulation 17 is available at <https://www.worldrugby.org/handbook/regulations>.

References to the Host Union and/ or Designated Disciplinary Official in World Rugby Regulation 17 shall refer to the person nominated by the SRL as the SRL Disciplinary Officer to fulfil such role in relation to the Match(es).

The scope of this regulation is to set out the procedures for the handling of the following disciplinary matters:

1. When a Player is Ordered Off the playing enclosure (Red Card);
2. When a Player is cited for an act or acts of Foul Play (Citing); and,
3. Where a player has been temporarily suspended three times in the same season in accordance with World Rugby Regulation 17.25 (Accumulated Yellow Cards)

All red cards and citing requests will be referred to the disciplinary panel for consideration. Where a player receives a third yellow card within the calendar year across all competitions, the Player shall be referred to the disciplinary panel for consideration.

1.6.1 General Obligations

Participating Clubs are reminded that they are responsible and accountable for the conduct of their Players, Team Members and other persons in attendance during the competitions and any Additional Match(es) in an official capacity with the Club and must ensure that their conduct is of the highest standard in accordance with the World Rugby Code of Conduct and that Matches including any Additional Match(es) are played in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour. World Rugby Regulation 20 sets out the applicable Tournament Disciplinary Regulations for Misconduct in relation to the Competition and any Additional Matches.

Each Participating Club and Team Member agrees to be bound by and comply with the provisions and requirements of the SRL Disciplinary Regulations and any decisions made thereunder. Each Participating Club also acknowledges its responsibility and accountability for the acts and/ or omissions of other person in attendance at the enclosure and any Additional match(es) in an official capacity with the Union.

Upon signing the team sheets prior to a Match, the Participating Club certifies that having undertaken all necessary enquiries, they are not aware of any of the following in relation to the players to participate in the Competitions and any Additional Match(es):

1. The existence of any outstanding disciplinary proceedings in respect of Foul Play and/ or Misconduct;
2. The existence of any outstanding appeal proceedings in relation to the above;
3. That the Player is not subject to any suspension from the Game as a result of disciplinary proceedings, appeal proceedings or otherwise.

If a Participating Club is unable to provide such certification, then the Player concerned is not qualified to represent that Club.

1.6.2 Citing

The majority, if not all, games covered by these regulations will not have a Citing Commissioner appointed.

1.6.2.1 Qualification to Cite

Each team participating in a Match, or any of its authorised officials, or its Club, may cite:

- (i) A Player(s) for an act(s) of alleged Foul Play committed during that Match provided that such act(s) have not been detected by the Match Officials;
- (ii) A Player for more than one incident of alleged Foul Play in the same Match;
- and
- (iii) More than one Player in any Match.

1.6.2.2 Citing procedure

Citing requests will only be accepted from the two clubs on the field when the incident occurred. In order to initiate a citing, the following process must be observed:

1. Each notice to cite shall be accompanied by a deposit of €75 to the SRL account (FI97 7997 7997 9482 16). In the event of a required deposit not being paid, the citing request shall be deemed to be abandoned. Should the citing complaint be upheld, this is to be refunded in full to the Club making the citing complaint.
2. The citing complaint should ordinarily contain the following information:
3. The date and place of the alleged Foul Play;
4. The name of the Player in respect of whom the complaint is made and the team being played for at the time of the alleged Foul Play;
5. The name of the opposing team; and
6. Details of the alleged Foul Play including brief details of the evidence relied upon.
7. A club wishing to cite must send the citing notification with proof of deposit transfer by 2359 of the day of the match to discipline@rugby.fi. Note that his address is configured to only accept emails from @rugby.fi addresses only. Failure to submit the request through this channel and within the time specified will and must clearly be referring to a specific incident;

8. The responsibility for obtaining information and reports in relation to the citing shall rest with the Club making the citing complaint. The Club shall liaise with the SRL Disciplinary Officer to ensure that relevant reports to ensure that relevant information and reports are circulated to the appropriate parties in advance of the panel sitting;
9. The Disciplinary Panel shall consider the citing complain and any other evidence it deems appropriate including via televisual means, oral (witness), written statements, film or photographic evidence. The Player cited shall have the right to be heard, to be represented and to produce evidence; and,
10. At all panels, a statement of the citing Club must be in available, or, in the event of a hearing a representative of the citing Club must be in attendance. Failing which the citing complaint will be dismissed. If an act of Foul Play is found to have been committed the SRL Disciplinary Panel shall take the appropriate action and shall apply the Sanctions for Foul Play, by following the core sanctioning principles set out in World Rugby Regulation 17.19.
11. By 2359 of the second day after the game (i.e. Monday night if the game was played on Saturday) both the team requesting the citing and the team of the cited player must have submitted all the evidence they wish the disciplinary panel to consider. If a video of the match was taken by a club (or club member, or affiliated individual) then an unedited version of the video must be submitted by this deadline. A €50 fine will be imposed for every day the video is not submitted (to a maximum of €200, payable to the SRL) without a valid reason for its delay being submitted. If the club that sent the initial citing request does not meet this deadline then the citing procedure will be terminated.

Once the deadline for submission of material has passed and any video evidence has been received, SRL will form a disciplinary committee.

1.6.3 Disciplinary panel

The panel will consist of the Disciplinary Officer, and two other members who are either:

1. Level 2 Match Official qualified or above with at least three years of experience as an L2 MO in the SRL competition, or,
2. A Rugby Europe Match Commissioner

No member of the Disciplinary Panel shall have taken official part of the match where the citing took place either as the Match Official or as an Assistant Referee. If the Disciplinary Officer was acting as a match official in the game in question then they must reclude themselves.

1.6.3.1 Use of video

When reviewing video evidence against specific player(s), the disciplinary panel may only consider evidence from one minute before the alleged incident and only until the incident and any immediate reaction to it has finished. Any additional players found to have committed foul play during this period may be cited by the disciplinary committee. If the disciplinary panel elects to make any additional citing(s), proceedings against those additional player(s) will begin with clubs given two days from the notification of citing to submit any evidence that they wish the disciplinary committee to consider when hearing that case.

1.6.3.2 Publication of reports

The disciplinary panel will write a report on all incidents referred to it, clearly outlining the basis behind the decision and the length of suspension awarded. This report will be made public to all members of the Finnish rugby community for the purpose of transparency in decision-making. All disciplinary panel reports are available at <http://www.rugby.fi/discipline>.

The publication of reports allows for SRL compliance with World Rugby Regulation 17.4.7.

1.6.4 Red cards

All red cards received during a match will automatically be referred to the disciplinary panel. By 2359 of second day after the game (i.e. Monday night if the game was played on Saturday) the team to whom the player belongs must have submitted all the evidence they wish the disciplinary panel to consider to the Disciplinary Officer via email to discipline@rugby.fi. If a video of the match was taken by a club (or club member, or affiliated individual) then an unedited version of the video must be submitted by this deadline. A €50 club fine will be imposed for every day the video is not submitted (to a maximum of €200, payable to SRL) unless a valid reason for its delay is provided if the holders of the video are members, or individuals affiliated with, the club to whom the dismissed individual belongs.

Any player that receives a red card in a 7s tournament will be suspended from participating in the rest of the tournament. The subsequent disciplinary procedures will also be enforced.

Once the deadline for submission of material has passed and any video evidence has been received, SRL will form a disciplinary panel.

1.6.5 Yellow cards

All yellow cards received during a match or 7s tournament will automatically be referred to the Disciplinary Officer for record keeping purposes. The purpose of this is to track all disciplinary matters and to support any hearings if the event is cited. Should a citing take place in relation to a yellow card, the citing procedure shall be followed normally.

1.6.6 Incidents occurring outside of SRL-run competition

In the event that a red/ yellow card or citing occur outside of an SRL-run competition, the disciplinary panel may also convene provided that the player is an SRL-license holder (or has been or may intend to be), if it is specifically referred to the panel (i.e. it will not convene automatically), and the incident in question occurred in Finland. In such cases, the regulations with regard to timings and other fixed procedures will be applied with

more flexibility in recognition of the fact that social tournaments should not be as tightly regulated, but all parties will be expected to act in a timely manner.

In the event that a player is found guilty of the offence, a ban will only be imposed if the severity of the offence is deemed to be top-end or if the type of offence is sensitive in nature.

1.6.7 Lengths and type of suspension

Imposed lengths of suspension where red cards are upheld or awarded retrospectively will be determined by using the World Rugby model modified to Finland (given the duration of the season). These guidelines are viewable at the back of this document as Attachment 1.

All suspensions will be given in weeks and will bar the player under suspension from competing in any competition during this time. The suspension period will begin the day before the next same-gender match (i.e. men's match for a suspended male and women's match for a suspended female) any team of the player's club is due to play. A player waiting for a suspension period to start may not represent any other club in competition during this time. The relevant dates will be included in the report of the disciplinary panel. If a game is cancelled or postponed after the publication of the report then the suspension period will begin on the date given in the report regardless. Such suspensions may carry across seasons if necessary.

The disciplinary panel has the authority to decide whether any suspension should include other codes (i.e. whether bans should include, or exclude, 7s or XV's tournaments/matches) or whether they should be considered distinct on a case-by-case basis.

1.6.8 Right of appeal

Once the disciplinary panel has formed, SRL will not accept new evidence or re-hear the same incident unless exceptional new evidence is brought to light with a clear reason why

it wasn't provided by the deadline provided. Barring the introduction of such evidence, the disciplinary panel's decision is final although further appeals may be made to the governing body of sport in Finland and be heard under the rules of that association.

1.7 Appealing regulatory decisions

Only clubs registered to SRL, FRRA, NT managers and SRL board members may lodge a complaint about SRL's regulations. These must be submitted in writing to the NLCM using official @rugby.fi email addresses. In all matters, the NLCM will be the sole adjudicator (so long as any ruling does not contravene any existing regulation).

2 XV Competitions

The competitions referred to in this section are separate and distinct from each other.

2.1 Administrative

2.1.1 *Match structure*

Unless otherwise stated, every match shall be played XV-a-side and teams may name up to 23 players in their starting line-up. If a team has less than 12 eligible players available for a XV-a-side match then the opposing team will be given the option to declare a win by forfeit without the match being played (this option must be enforced before kick-off). If both teams have less than 12 players then the match may be abandoned and the score will be recorded as a 0 – 0 draw if the teams are unable to arrange a mutually agreed date for the game to be played.

Unless otherwise stated, matches will adhere to all World Rugby regulations.

2.1.2 *Withdrawal from a league*

If a club chooses to withdraw from the league during the season when the club has matches left to play, they will immediately be removed from the calendar and the results of any previously scheduled matches will be erased. In the event that this would have significant bearings on a league table toward the end of the regular season, an alternative scenario may be enforced by the NLCM. In such situations, players of that withdrawn team will be eligible to be fielded by other clubs, but such players will be considered registered to the first club that they represent for the remainder of the season.

2.1.3 *Abandoning a match in progress*

If a game is abandoned while in progress then the outcome is dependent on when and why it was abandoned. If play is halted due to external reasons (circumstances out of the control of either team) and the first half has already ended then the score at the time of stoppage will stand as the final result. If play is halted during the first half due to external

reasons then the game will be ruled incomplete and a replay ordered on a date mutually agreed by both teams. If the teams cannot agree on a date then one will be set by the NLCM or a different outcome enforced by the NLCM.

If a game is abandoned due to reasons that either team should have been able to foresee and prevent (as adjudged by the NLCM), then the final outcome will be decided by the NLCM based on the merits of the incident.

2.1.4 Forfeits

If a team forfeits a fixture then the official result will be recorded as a 70 – 0 win for non-offending team and the offending team will be deducted one competition point. No bonus points will be awarded for a forfeit win.

2.1.5 Scoring the league

Teams will receive 4 points for a win, 2 points for a draw, and 0 points for a loss. Teams will also score a bonus point for scoring four or more tries in a match or by losing a game by seven points or less. Teams may score two bonus points from one match. If two or more teams are tied on divisional points during the season then the rankings will be decided as follows:

1. The points difference throughout the season
2. The result(s) between the teams during the season
3. The number of red cards received throughout the season
4. The number of yellow cards received throughout the season
5. A coin toss (or other random method supervised by the league and competitions manager)

If more than two teams are tied then the above criteria is used until one team is 'the winner'. The criterion then starts again from #1 for the remaining teams.

2.1.6 Tied matches

If a playoff match finishes in a draw then a mandatory 10 minutes of extra-time will be played (i.e. all 10 minutes must be played, plus any additional stoppage-time incurred during this period). Whichever team scores the most points during this period will be declared the winner of the game. If the scores are still tied then an additional 10 minutes of sudden death extra-time (plus any additional stoppage-time incurred during this period) will be played with the first team to score being the winner. If neither team is able to score during this period then the winner of the game will be determined by a place kick competition, the details of which shall be determined and enforced by the match referee.

2.1.7 Finals Day

All finals will be played in a predetermined venue on 'Finals Day'. Where one team finished higher than the other during the regular season (applicable only in competitions in which teams were scheduled to play against each other) then they will be considered to be the home side. The one exception to the principle however is that the higher-ranked side will also be awarded the benefit of first choice of match-day colours. Where teams are contesting a final but were not scheduled to play each other during the regular season then a coin toss will determine the home side (the home side in this scenario also being granted choice of match-day colours).

2.1.8 Promotion and relegation

All divisions in the men's competition will be subject to promotion and relegation. In each instance, the winner of the lower-division will be offered the opportunity to be promoted for the following season if the team is eligible. If this option is declined, no team will be promoted from the lower division and no relegation from the higher-division will be enforced. If this option is accepted, the lowest-ranked team from the higher division will be relegated for the following season.

All teams are eligible for promotion unless they meet either of the below criteria:

1. The team is a 2nd XV and promotion would result in the team being placed in the same division as their 1st XV
2. The team has forfeited a match at any point during the season (this does not apply to the men's Division 2)

The women's competitions are currently not subject to promotion and relegation.

2.2 Finnish Championship and Division 1 (male)

2.2.1 *Format*

The Championship and Division 1 will follow a round-robin league-style format where each team will play every other team in the division twice: once home and once away. At the end of the regular season, the top four teams will advance to the playoffs.

2.2.2 *Fielding 1st team players*

Division 1 teams that are the only male team representing their club in SRL XV's competitions may field players licensed to them without restriction. Division 1 teams that also field a men's Championship team may field players licensed to them without restriction provided that they have not represented any national side as a starting player within the previous twelve months (taken from the date the match is due to be played) and that they have not, or will not, play as a starting player for the Championship side during the same weekend (this does not apply to front row players who may play for the Div1 side without restriction). Exceptions to the national team ruling will only be granted if it can be proven that they are currently not of a 1st XV standard, such as returning from long injury. If this exception is applied, the team fielding the player must note this on the match report card and obtain the opposing captain's signature to show that the opponents have been notified. Any disagreements on a player's eligibility under this exception should be mediated by the match referee or the NLCM prior to kick off.

2.2.3 *Fielding players licensed to another club*

Any club (note: *club*, not separate teams within a club) can name up to five (5) players from another club or clubs not playing in the same division as they are. Maximum three (3) of these named players may be fielded by the club who they are not licensed to as "loan players" as long as they do not take part in any other game in any division during that weekend. Championship teams may name any player from any lower division as such "loan player" without restriction. Division 1 team may name players as "loan players" provided that they have not represented any national side as a starting player within the previous twelve months (taken from the date the match is due to be played). Any club

wishing to name a loan player must inform both the technical director and NLCM before midnight on July 31sta, after which no more loan player nominations can be made. After a player loan has been finalised they can only represent the club that has first loaned them in addition to their home club. A team that fields a non-eligible player or that names such a player on their match sheet may be subject to penalty.

2.2.4 Playoffs

The playoffs will be contested between the top four teams of the regular season. The first-ranked team will host the fourth-ranked side and the second-ranked side will host the third-ranked side in a single-leg semi-final. The winners of the semi-finals will then contest the final.

2.3 Division 2 (men)

2.3.1 Foreword

Division 2 is not bound to these regulations as strictly as the Finnish Championship/Division 1. If all sides in any incident are happy for any part of these regulations to be waived then sides may be permitted to do so. Additionally, common practice may take precedent over these regulations at the discretion of the NLCM.

2.3.2 Format

Division 2 will be contested as one league but teams will be split into two divisions (East and West). Each division will follow a round-robin league-style format where each team will play every other team in the division twice: once home and once away. The winners of each pool will contest the Division 1 final.

2.3.3 Fielding 1st team players

Division 2 teams that are the only male team representing their club in SRL XV's competitions may field players licensed to them without restriction. Division 2 teams that also field a men's Championship or Division 1 team may field players licensed to them without restriction provided that they have not represented any national side as a starting player within the previous twelve months (taken from the date the match is due to be played) and that they have not, or will not, play as a starting player for the Championship/Division 1 side during the same weekend (this does not apply to front row players who may play for the Div2 side without restriction). Exceptions to the national team ruling will only be granted if it can be proven that they are currently not of a 1st XV standard, such as returning from long injury. If this exception is applied, the team fielding the player must note this on the match report card and obtain the opposing captain's signature to show that the opponents have been notified. Any disagreements on a player's eligibility under this exception should be mediated by the match referee or the NLCM prior to kick off.

2.3.4 Fielding players licensed to another club

Any club can name up to five (5) players from another club or clubs not playing in the same division as they are. Maximum three (3) of these named players may be fielded by the club who they are not licensed to as “loan players” as long as they do not take part in any other game in any division during that weekend and provided that the player(s) in question have not represented any national side as a starting player within the previous twelve months (taken from the date the match is due to be played). Any club wishing to name a loan player must inform both the technical director and NLCM before midnight on July 31st, after which no more loan player nominations can be made. After a player loan has been finalised they can only represent the club that has first loaned them in addition to their home club. A team that fields a non-eligible player or that names such a player on their match sheet may be subject to penalty.

In addition to those players loaned above (against which the opposing team cannot object), any Division 2 team may field players not registered to them provided that they obtain the expressed agreement of the opposing team(s) captain, the NT ruling is considered, and that the player has not, or will not, play as a starting player for any other side during the same weekend. It is the responsibility of the team fielding the borrowed player(s) to make the loan(s) known to the opposing team prior to kick-off via the match report card. Such consent must be sought before the start of every match in which the borrowed player(s) are/is fielded.

A team that fields a non-eligible player or that fails to mark such loaned players on their match sheet may be subject to penalty.

2.3.5 Law 3.5

Law 3.5 (governing squad sizes being linked to the number of front row-eligible players named on the match sheet) does not apply to Div2.

2.4 Women's Championship

2.4.1 *Foreword*

The Women's Championship is not bound to these regulations as strictly as the men's Championship. If all sides in any incident are happy for any part of these regulations to be waived then sides may be permitted to do so. Additionally, common practice may take precedent over these regulations at the discretion of the NLCM.

2.4.2 *Format*

The Women's Championship will follow a round-robin league-style format where each team will play every other team in the division twice: once home and once away. At the end of the regular season, the top four teams will advance to the playoffs.

2.4.3 *Fielding players licensed to another club*

Championship teams may field players licensed to their club without restriction. Teams may also field up to three players who are not licensed to their club but the players and the club to which they are licensed must be indicated on the match report card. There are no restrictions on how these three players may be utilised.

A team that fields a non-eligible player or that fails to mark such loaned players on their match sheet may be subject to penalty.

2.4.4 *Playoffs*

The playoffs will be contested between the top four teams of the regular season. The first-ranked team will host the fourth-ranked side and the second-ranked side will host the third-ranked side in a single-leg semi-final. The winners of the semi-finals will then contest the final.

2.5 Women's Division 1

2.5.1 *Foreword*

This competition is entirely developmental with no strict governance. If all sides in any incident are happy for any part of these regulations to be waived then sides may be permitted to do so.

2.5.2 *Format*

Women's Division 1 will follow a round-robin league-style format where each team will play every other team in the division twice: once home and once away. At the end of the regular season, the highest-ranked team will win the division title.

2.5.3 *Fielding players licensed to another club*

Teams may field players licensed to their club without restriction and may also borrow players if they have permission from the opposing side to do so.

A team that fields a non-eligible player or that fails to mark such loaned players on their match sheet may be subject to penalty.

3 7s competitions

This section pertains to both men's and women's SRL 7s.

3.1 Administrative

3.1.1 Format

The 7s series will be open to all SRL-registered teams. The number and location of tournaments within the 7s series will be decided in advance of the season. There is no minimum or maximum amount of tournaments required. Teams will collect competition points based on their rankings at each tournament and the team with the most cumulative points over the series will win the SRL 7s.

3.1.2 Organisation

The NLCM will be responsible for deciding the number of pools and the draw for each tournament, and the host club will be responsible for determining the order of play.

3.1.3 Withdrawal/ non-attendance

A team is not obligated to attend all tournaments within a series. There is no penalty for non-attendance of any tournament.

3.1.4 Abandoning a match in progress

Tournament organisers will be responsible for assessing the outcome of abandonment, as the time constraints placed on tournament events require flexibility.

3.1.5 Forfeits

In the event that a team is scheduled to play in an event but forfeits, the non-forfeiting side will be awarded a 21 – 0 win. No financial penalty will be imposed and no competition point will be deducted. A team that forfeits a match may continue to play in the rest of the tournament.

3.1.6 Fielding players licensed to another club

In principle, teams may only field players licensed to them. Exceptions to this principle will only be made when a team has incurred injuries on the day that would jeopardise their ability to field a competitive team (this may extend beyond the starting XII), provided that they have permission from the captain of the opposition. This is meant so that teams struggling for numbers can still field a side, not to help clubs put out a stronger team. It is hoped that teams respect this aim.

3.1.7 Representing multiple teams at a single event

Once a player has taken the field for a given team at a tournament, they may not represent any other team during the same event. The only exception relates to a player that is loaned under the above regulation. In such instances, a loaned player will not be permitted to return to their original team for the rest of the tournament.

3.1.8 Fielding more than one side and scratch teams

Clubs may field up to two teams in each tournament. One of these teams may be a scratch team (such as a regional or collaborative squad), but not both. In this manner, scratch teams may be a registered team of more than one club. If two teams are entered, these will be considered distinct and separate from each other throughout the 7s series. A player who has played for one such team may therefore not play for their club's other 7s side without being governed by the above rules on fielding players licensed to another club and playing for multiple teams during a single event.

3.1.9 Squad size

Clubs may name a tournament squad of 15, but only a squad of 12 may be submitted for each match.

3.1.10 Tied matches

If a playoff match finishes in a draw then a maximum of two, five-minute periods of sudden-death extra-time will be played. If the scores are still tied then the winner of the game will be determined by a drop-kick competition – the details of which shall be determined and enforced by the match referee.

3.2 Scoring

3.2.1 Scoring within an individual tournament (i.e. pools)

Teams will receive four points for a win, two points for a draw, and zero points for a loss. There will be no bonus point system. If two teams are tied on points during a tournament then the rankings will be decided as follows:

1. The points difference throughout the tournament
2. The result(s) between the teams during the tournament
3. The number of red cards received throughout the tournament
4. A coin toss (or other random method)

If more than two teams are tied then the above criteria is used until one team is ‘the winner’. The criterion then starts again from #1 for the remaining teams.

3.2.2 Scoring the series

Teams will score ten points for a tournament win, eight points for coming second, six points for coming third, four points for coming fourth, three points for coming fifth, two points for coming sixth, one point for coming seventh, and zero points for finishing eighth and lower. Where an insufficient number of playoff matches are held to make these distinctions, teams may be tied for a place and be awarded the corresponding points (i.e. both losing semi-finalists may be awarded six points if there is no playoff game between them).

If two teams are tied on series points during the season then the rankings will be decided as follows:

1. The points difference throughout the series
2. The result(s) between the teams during the series
3. The number of red cards received throughout the series
4. A coin toss (or other random method supervised by the league and competitions manager)

If more than two teams are tied then the above criteria is used until one team is 'the winner'. The criterion then starts again from #1 for the remaining teams.

4 Abbreviations, glossary and contacts

4.1 Abbreviations

FRRRA	Finland Rugby Referees Association
NLCM	National league and competitions manager
NT	National team
SRL	Suomen Rugbyliitto (Finnish Rugby Federation)
XVs	Fifteen-a-side

4.2 Glossary

SRL-sanctioned fixtures are considered to be the official tournaments and competitions operated by SRL.

4.3 Contacts

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5 Appendix 1: Disciplinary sanctions

Law	Description	SRL Sanctions			
		LOW	MID	HIGH	MAX
10.4(a)	Striking another Player with a hand, arm or fist	1	2	3	52
10.4(a)	Striking another Player with the elbow	1	2	3	52
10.4(a)	Striking with knee	1	3	4	52
10.4(a)	Striking with head	2	3	5	104
10.4(b)	Stamping/trampling on an Opponent	1	2	3	52
10.4(c)	Kicking an Opponent	2	3	4	52
10.4(d)	Tripping an Opponent with the foot/leg	1	2	3	52
10.4(e)	Dangerous tackling of an Opponent including early or late and including the action known as the "stiff arm tackle"	1	2	3	52
10.4(e)	Dangerous tackling of an Opponent including a tackle or attempted tackle above the line of the shoulders even if the tackle starts below the line of the shoulders	1	2	3	52
10.4(f)	Holding, pushing or obstructing an Opponent not holding the ball, by a Player who is not in possession of the ball, except in a scrum, ruck or maul	1	2	3	52
10.4(f)/(k)	Dangerous charging or obstructing or grabbing of Opponent without the ball, including shouldering	1	2	3	52
10.4(g)	Dangerous charging or knocking down an Opponent with the ball, including shouldering	1	2	3	52
10.4(h)	A player must not charge into a ruck or maul. Charging includes any contact made without use of the arms, or without grasping a player	1	2	3	52
10.4(i)	Tackling, tapping, pushing or pulling an Opponent jumping for the ball in a lineout or in open play	1	2	4	52
10.4(j)	Lifting a Player from the ground and either dropping or driving that Player's head and/or upper body into the ground whilst the Player's feet are off the ground	1	2	4	52
10.4(k)	Causing a scrum, ruck or maul to collapse	1	2	3	52
10.4(m)	Testicle grabbing or twisting or squeezing	4	6	8	208
10.4(m)	Biting	4	6	8	208
10.4(m)	Contact with Eyes or the Eye Area	4	6	8	208
10.4(m)	Spitting at Players	2	3	4	52
10.4(m)	Verbal abuse of Players based on Religion, Race, Colour, or National or Ethnic Origin or otherwise	2	3	5	52
10.4(s)/(m)	Verbal Abuse of Match Officials	2	4	6	52
10.4(s)/(m)	Physical Abuse of Match Officials	8	16	32	Life
10.4(s)/(m)	Threatening Actions or Words at Match Officials	4	8	16	260
10.4(m)	Hair pulling or grabbing	1	2	3	52
10.4(m)	Any other acts (not previously referred to) which are contrary to good sportsmanship	1	2	4	52