

Suomen Rugbyliitto

# 2020 COMPETITION REGULATIONS



## Foreword

These rules and regulations have been written to be as comprehensive as possible, but 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 external organisations whose regulations may also apply to the governance of Finnish rugby.

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.

## Abbreviations

FRRA	Finland Rugby Referees Association
NLCM	National league and competitions manager
NT	National team
SRL	Suomen Rugbyliitto (Finnish Rugby Federation)
7s	Seven-a-side
XVs	Fifteen-a-side

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Administrative</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1	Acts contrary to the spirit of the game	1
1.2	Use of banned substances	1
1.3	Team eligibility	1
1.4	Player eligibility	1
1.4.1	Licenses and insurance	1
1.4.2	Representation of a club	2
1.4.3	Age restrictions	2
1.4.4	Investigation of eligibility	3
1.4.5	Result of fielding an ineligible player	3
1.5	Club responsibility	4
1.5.1	Responsibility of the home team	4
1.5.2	Responsibility of both teams	5
1.6	Disciplinary matters	6
1.6.1	General obligations	7
1.6.2	Disciplinary panel	7
1.6.3	Red cards	8
1.6.4	Yellow cards	9
1.6.5	Citation	9
1.6.6	Incidents occurring outside of SRL-run competition	10
1.6.7	Lengths and type of suspension	11
1.6.8	Right of appeal	11
1.7	Appealing regulatory decisions	12
<b>2</b>	<b>XV Competitions</b>	<b>13</b>
2.1	Administrative	13
2.1.1	Match structure	13
2.1.2	Withdrawal from a league	13
2.1.3	Abandoning a match in progress	13
2.1.4	Forfeits	14
2.1.5	Scoring the league	14
2.1.6	Tied matches	15
2.1.7	Finals Day	15
2.1.8	Promotion and relegation	15
2.2	Finnish Championship (male)	17

2.2.1	Format .....	17
2.2.2	Eligibility and loan players.....	17
2.2.3	Playoffs .....	18
<b>2.3</b>	<b>Division 1 (male).....</b>	<b>19</b>
2.3.1	Foreword.....	19
2.3.2	Format .....	19
2.3.3	Fielding Championship team players .....	19
2.3.4	Fielding loan players .....	20
2.3.5	Playoffs .....	21
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Women’s Championship .....</b>	<b>22</b>
2.4.1	Foreword.....	22
2.4.2	Format .....	22
2.4.3	Fielding players licensed to another club .....	22
2.4.4	Playoffs .....	23
<b>3</b>	<b>7s competitions .....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Administrative .....</b>	<b>24</b>
3.1.1	Format .....	24
3.1.2	Organisation.....	24
3.1.3	Withdrawal/non-attendance .....	24
3.1.4	Abandoning a match or tournament in progress.....	24
3.1.5	Forfeits .....	25
3.1.6	Fielding players licensed to another club .....	25
3.1.7	Representing multiple teams at a single event.....	25
3.1.8	Fielding more than one side and scratch teams.....	25
3.1.9	Squad size.....	26
3.1.10	Tied matches.....	26
<b>3.2</b>	<b>Scoring .....</b>	<b>26</b>
3.2.1	Scoring within an individual tournament (i.e. pools) .....	26
3.2.2	Scoring the series.....	26
<b>4</b>	<b>Contacts.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Appendix 1: Disciplinary sanctions.....</b>	<b>29</b>

# **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, both 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 the SRL.

## **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. Participating 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 competition, 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 team sheet, 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, or 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. a player has moved to a new city, as opposed to simply desiring to play for a new team, or a player wishes to transfer 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 expiration.

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 by default (a player wishing to be considered registered to a different XV's club should contact the NLCM) 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 in SRL competition. Players who have reached their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday may 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. Female players that have reached their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday may 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 18<sup>th</sup> birthday (male or female) may not play or train in the front row of the scrum, regardless of any permissions granted.

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 SRL check a player's eligibility may only be submitted by the opposition club or by a match official appointed to the game in question. 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 a 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 an ineligible player after-the-fact (provided that the procedure outlined above has been followed) then the non-offending team will be given the option of either accepting the result of the game as played or

claiming a forfeit win. Repeat or deliberate offenses of this nature may result in additional sanctions against the club at the discretion of the disciplinary panel. An ineligible player that the disciplinary panel considers knew, or should have known, that they were ineligible may also be subject to a personal sanction. The entry-level suspension for this form of offense is one week.

## **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. A pitch below this standard may also be used if they have either been previously accepted by SRL or is accepted by the match referee (provided it is safe to play on). Any disputes on match day should be settled by the match referee. If the pitch does not meet these requirements, then the home team will forfeit the match. Disputes in advance of match day should be mediated by the NLCM. Clubs should also adhere to the implemented requirements for games (pitch flags, goalposts, technical zones, scoreboards and benches for substitutes), see appendix 2.

#### *1.5.1.2 Informing the visitors*

The home club is responsible for explicitly informing the visiting team and the match referee (and/or FRRA) of the time and place of the match at least five days prior to the day of the match (i.e. by 2359 on Monday if the game is scheduled for Saturday). 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 Administrative duties in the event of a non-appointed match official*

In the event that no match referee has been appointed by FRRA, then the home team will be responsible for collecting the team sheets from both clubs and forwarding them to the NLCM within two hours of the final whistle.

## **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 of cancellation within five days of kick-off (i.e. by 2359 on Monday if the game is to be played on Saturday), then said club will be responsible for incurring the costs of the opposing team related to the cancellation. Such costs include, but are not limited to, pitch reservation and travel.

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 team's 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. If no new date can be found, the result will be recorded as a draw.

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

### *1.5.2.2 Team sheets*

Each club will be responsible for completing their team sheet in full (names and license numbers for all players and pitch-side personnel) and delivering it to the match referee at least 15 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 non-submission of the team sheet delays the scheduled kick-off by ten minutes then the non-offending team will be entitled to claim a forfeit win if they choose to do so. Teamsheets should also be sent to [teamsheets@finland.rugby](mailto:teamsheets@finland.rugby) for the purpose of administration and any potential disciplinary matters.

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. Clubs should take special note of the differing regulations regarding the fielding of loan players in each competition.

By naming a player on the team sheet, the club acknowledge that the information provided is accurate, that all players are fully SRL-licensed, have health-insurance that covers them in the event of injury sustained in this fixture, and are eligible to be fielded in the match and competition under SRL regulations.

#### *1.5.2.3 Providing non-appointed referees*

In the event that a match referee has not been appointed by FRRRA then it is the responsibility of both clubs to provide a suitable alternative. Such a referee may be a member of either club. In the event that more than one match official is nominated and teams cannot agree on which should officiate, the dispute should be settled by the NLCM, a senior FRRRA representative, or suitable alternative. If no match official is provided, then teams will be given the opportunity to postpone the game to a mutually-agreed date. If no date can be found, the match will be recorded as a draw.

## **1.6 Disciplinary matters**

World Rugby Regulation 17 provides the foundation for the SRL's disciplinary regulations.

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
3. Where a player has been temporarily suspended three times in the same season
4. Other disciplinary issues referred to the panel by SRL administration (for example, see regulation 1.1.)

All red cards, citing requests and accumulated yellow cards will be automatically referred to the disciplinary panel.

### ***1.6.1 General obligations***

Participating clubs are responsible and accountable for the conduct of their players, team members and other persons in attendance in any official capacity during SRL competition and must ensure that their conduct is of the highest standard in accordance with the World Rugby code of conduct and that matches are played in accordance with disciplined and sporting behaviour.

Each participating club and team member agree to be bound by and comply with the provisions and requirements of the SRL disciplinary regulations and any decisions made thereunder.

### ***1.6.2 Disciplinary panel***

The panel will consist of the disciplinary officer, and two other members who are either:

1. Minimum qualified level 2 match officials or equivalent, with at least three years of experience in SRL competition
2. A Rugby Europe qualified match commissioner

It is the responsibility and prerogative of the disciplinary officer to form the panel. No member of the disciplinary panel shall have taken official part of the match where the citing took place, nor have any conflict of interest. If the disciplinary officer played any

official part in the game in question or has conflict of interest, then they must recuse themselves and appoint a suitable alternative.

#### *1.6.2.1 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.

#### *1.6.2.2 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 [finland.rugby/discipline](http://finland.rugby/discipline). The publication of reports allows for SRL compliance with World Rugby regulation 17.4.7.

### **1.6.3 Red cards**

All red cards received during a match will automatically be referred to the disciplinary panel. By 2359 of the 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](mailto:discipline@rugby.fi). Note that the email must originate from the club's formal [@finland.rugby](mailto:@finland.rugby) address. 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. Clubs that do not submit such video in their possession may be subject to separate sanction unless a valid reason for its delay is provided.

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

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

#### ***1.6.4 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 create a record of player disciplinary history. Should a citing take place in relation to a yellow card, the citing procedure shall be followed normally.

#### ***1.6.5 Citation***

Citing requests will only be accepted from the two clubs on the field when the incident occurred. There are two relevant deadlines that clubs must be aware of: announcing the intention to cite and submitting the citation. Both steps must be followed for a citation to be considered by the disciplinary panel.

##### ***1.6.5.1 Intention to cite***

Any club wishing to initiate a citing must send an intention to cite to the disciplinary officer by 2359 of the day of the match. The formal @finland.rugby email address of the club to whom the player being cited is registered must be carbon copied (CC'd). Note that the email must originate from the club's formal @finland.rugby address. This email must include:

1. Details about the game in which the incident occurred
2. The identity of the player(s) being cited
3. Specific reason for the citation

4. A receipt demonstrating a successful deposit of €100 to the SRL account (amount to be refunded should the citing complaint be upheld)

#### *1.6.5.2 The citation*

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 evidence that they wish the disciplinary panel to consider. This typically consists of player statements and video/photographic evidence. 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 may 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, the disciplinary officer will form a disciplinary panel.

#### ***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 informal competition 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 high-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 that the Finnish season is typically much shorter than average). These guidelines are viewable as Attachment 1.

Any player receiving 3 yellow cards in the season (including play-off games) will receive an automatic 1 week ban.

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 game any team of the player's club is due to play for which the player would be eligible. 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 and autonomy to evaluate how suspensions should be managed in exceptional circumstances. These include but are not limited to suspensions carrying across seasons, and suspensions incurred in XV's competitions affecting 7s and vice versa.

Suspensions incurred within SRL competition also apply to international fixtures.

### ***1.6.8 Right of appeal***

The disciplinary panel 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 @finland.rugby 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 provided that law 3 (team) is adhered to. Teams with a full 23-person squad may use all eight replacements. If a team has 11 or less 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 11 or less 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.

#### ***2.1.2 Withdrawal from a league***

If a team chooses to withdraw from a competition during the season, they may apply for permission to do from the NLCM. If granted, 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 points difference 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 NLCM)

If more than two teams are tied, then the above criteria are 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 drop goal competition, the details of which shall be enforced by the match referee using the Rugby Europe model.

### ***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 depending on the results of a promotion-relegation fixture to be played on finals day (although this fixture may be waived if promotion/relegation between given divisions would be strategically undesirable in a given year). In each instance, the winner of the lower-division will play against the lowest-ranked team of the higher division. If the lower-division team win the fixture, then they will be offered the opportunity to be promoted for the following season if the team is eligible. If this option is accepted, the higher-division team will be relegated for the following season. If this option is declined,

no team will be promoted from the lower division and no relegation from the higher-division will be enforced.

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

1. The team is a 2<sup>nd</sup> XV and promotion would result in the team being placed in the same division as their 1<sup>st</sup> XV
2. The team has forfeited a match at any point during the season (this does not apply to teams in men's Division 1 and will not apply in the scenario that the team that would be relegated also forfeited any matches during their season)

## 2.2 Finnish Championship (male)

### 2.2.1 *Format*

The 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 three teams will advance to the playoffs.

### 2.2.2 *Eligibility and loan players*

Teams may field players registered to their club without restriction.

In addition:

1. any club (note: **club**, not separate teams within a club) may name up to five players from another club or clubs that do not play in the same division to be designated loan players available to the specific other club to which they are registered as loan players. Such loan players will be notified by the club to which they will be loaned as early as possible in the season but by no later than 23.59 on July 15<sup>st</sup> in each season, after which time no additional loan player nominations can be made. Notification must be made to both the technical director and the NLCM by e-mail.
2. A maximum of three of these named loan players may be fielded by the team to which they are loaned but not licensed in any game however, if a team is fine with any opposing team requesting it be allowed to field more than the maximum 3 loan players to avoid a game being cancelled then clubs may agree to waive this maximum in relation to any specific game. In such circumstances the relevant clubs should notify the NCLM accordingly confirming the number and identity of all loan players it has been agreed in the relevant game. However, there is no obligation on any team to agree to the use of extra loan players by the opposing team in any specific game.
3. Any club wishing to field a loan player must inform both the technical director and NLCM at least 3 days prior to the game in which such loan player will play.

4. Loan players cannot play for another club in the same division on any occasion unless written consent from SRL has been obtained in advance in exceptional circumstances.
5. Clubs are expected to use the loan players system in the spirit of the game and with the intention of all clubs fulfilling fixtures and playing as much rugby as possible to further the development of rugby throughout Finland.
6. Any issues or disputes to be referred to and resolved by the NCLM.

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

### ***2.2.3 Playoffs***

The playoffs will be contested between the top three teams of the regular season. The first-ranked team will advance directly to the final and the second-ranked side will host the third-ranked side in a single-leg semi-final. The winner of the semi-final will then contest the final.

## **2.3 Division 1 (male)**

### ***2.3.1 Foreword***

Division 1 is not bound to these regulations as strictly as the championship or 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, provided that safety is not compromised. Additionally, common practice may take precedent over these regulations at the discretion of the NLCM.

### ***2.3.2 Format***

Division 1 will follow a single-fixture format where each team will play every other team in the division once: either home or away. At the end of the regular season, the top three teams will advance to the playoffs.

### ***2.3.3 Fielding Championship team players***

Division 1 teams that are the only male team representing their club in SRL XV competition may field players licensed to them without restriction.

Division 1 teams that also field a men's championship or division 1 team may field players licensed to them without restriction.

No player can play 2 games on the same day for either the same or 2 different clubs. The exception to this restriction is that, provided a replacement in any Championship game has not played more than a half (40 minutes) in such Championship game, the same player can then play in a Division 1 game on the same day provided that it is encouraged that players should not play more than a half (40 minutes) of the Division 1 game if possible.

No player which has played for any national team in the previous 2 seasons can play in a game in the division below the division in which they customarily play for their club. There is no restriction on players who have played for national teams playing in a game in

the division above the division in which they customarily play however. Exceptions to the national team ruling will only be granted if it can be proven that they are currently not of a 1<sup>st</sup> 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. If no agreement can be reached before kick-off, the player will not be considered eligible.

### ***2.3.4 Fielding loan players***

In addition:

1. any club (note: **club**, not separate teams within a club) may name up to five players from another club or clubs that do not play in the same division to be designated loan players available to the specific other club to which they are registered as loan players. Such loan players will be notified by the club to which they will be loaned as early as possible in the season but by no later than 23.59 on July 15<sup>th</sup> in each season, after which time no additional loan player nominations can be made. Notification must be made to both the technical director and the NLCM by e-mail.
2. A maximum of three of these named loan players may be fielded by the team to which they are loaned but not licensed in any game however, if a team is fine with any opposing team requesting it be allowed to field more than the maximum 3 loan players to avoid a game being cancelled then clubs may agree to waive this maximum in relation to any specific game. In such circumstances the relevant clubs should notify the NCLM accordingly confirming the number and identity of all loan players it has been agreed in the relevant game. However, there is no obligation on any team to agree to the use of extra loan players by the opposing team in any specific game.
3. Any club wishing to field a loan player must inform both the technical director and NLCM at least 3 days prior to the game in which such loan player will play.



4. Loan players cannot play for another club in the same division on any occasion unless written consent from SRL has been obtained in advance in exceptional circumstances.
5. Clubs are expected to use the loan players system in the spirit of the game and with the intention of all clubs fulfilling fixtures and playing as much rugby as possible to further the development of rugby throughout Finland.
6. Any issues or disputes to be referred to and resolved by the NCLM.

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 Playoffs***

The playoffs will be contested between the top three teams of the regular season. The first-ranked team will advance directly to the final and the second-ranked side will host the third-ranked side in a single-leg semi-final. The winner of the semi-final will then contest the final.

## 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 three 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.

In addition:

1. any club (note: **club**, not separate teams within a club) may name up to five players from another club or clubs that do not play in the same division to be designated loan players available to the specific other club to which they are registered as loan players. Such loan players will be notified by the club to which they will be loaned as early as possible in the season but by no later than 23.59 on July 15st in each season, after which time no additional loan player nominations can be made. Notification must be made to both the technical director and the NLCM by e-mail.
2. A maximum of three of these named loan players may be fielded by the team to which they are loaned but not licensed in any game however, if a team is fine with any opposing team requesting it be allowed to field more than the maximum 3 loan players to avoid a game being cancelled then clubs may agree to waive this maximum in relation to any specific game. In such circumstances the relevant clubs should notify the NCLM accordingly confirming the number and identity of all loan players it has been agreed in

the relevant game. However, there is no obligation on any team to agree to the use of extra loan players by the opposing team in any specific game.

3. Any club wishing to field a loan player must inform both the technical director and NLCM at least 3 days prior to the game in which such loan player will play.

4. Loan players cannot play for another club in the same division on any occasion unless written consent from SRL has been obtained in advance in exceptional circumstances.

5. Clubs are expected to use the loan players system in the spirit of the game and with the intention of all clubs fulfilling fixtures and playing as much rugby as possible to further the development of rugby throughout Finland.

6. Any issues or disputes to be referred to and resolved by the NCLM.

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 three teams of the regular season. The first-ranked team will automatically progress to the final, whereas the second-ranked side will host the third-ranked side in a single-leg semi-final. The winner of the semi-final will then contest the final against the first-ranked team.

### **3 7s competitions**

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

#### **3.1 Administrative**

##### ***3.1.1 Format***

The number and location of tournaments within the 7s series will be decided in advance of the season. There is no minimum or maximum number of tournaments that teams must compete in to be considered to be included in the series. 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 men's or women's rugby coordinator will be responsible for deciding the number of pools and the draw for each tournament. 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.

Teams that are due to compete at a tournament but withdraw within five days of the event (i.e. after 2359 on Monday if the tournament is to be played on Saturday), will be liable to pay their share of tournament fees where applicable.

##### ***3.1.4 Abandoning a match or tournament 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 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 enforced by the match referee using the Rugby Europe model.

## **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 points difference 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 are 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 points difference 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 are used until one team is 'the winner'. The criterion then starts again from #1 for the remaining teams.

## 4 Contacts

### National league and competitions manager

Andrew Cotton

+358456575758

[Competitions@finland.rugby](mailto:Competitions@finland.rugby)

### General secretary

Hanne Yli-Parkas

[secretary@finland.rugby](mailto:secretary@finland.rugby)

### Disciplinary officer

Palemia Field

[discipline@finland.rugby](mailto:discipline@finland.rugby)

### Technical director

Stephen Whittaker

+358401679136

[technicaldirector@finland.rugby](mailto:technicaldirector@finland.rugby)

### Clubs

*All addresses are @fnland.rugby:*

Turku@      Espoo@      FRRA@      Helsinki@      Hämeenlinna@ Joensuu@

Jyväskylä@      Kalev@      Kuopio@      Lahti@

OYUS@ (Oulu)      Pori@      Porvoo@      Saimaa@      Seinäjoki@

Tampere@      Warriors@      Vaasa@



## 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 on an Opponent	1	2	3	52
10.4(b)	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)	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(m)	Other acts contrary to good sportsmanship	1	2	4	52
10.4(s)	Verbal Abuse of Match Officials	2	4	6	52
10.4(s)	Physical Abuse of Match Officials	8	16	32	Life
10.4(s)	Threatening Actions or Words at Match Officials	4	8	16	260