



# **WHEELCHAIR SUPER LEAGUE COMPETITION RULES**

# **2024**

# COMPETITION RULES



## **1. APPLICABLE OPERATIONAL RULES**

The “Betfred Wheelchair Rugby League Super League” (BWhRLSL) sits within tier five of the RFL competition structure. All teams participating in the BWhRLSL are bound by the RFL Operational Rules for Tiers Four, Five and Six (Operational Rules).

## **2. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS**

Each Club hereby acknowledges and agrees that the beneficial title to all copyright, trade marks (whether registered or not) and any other intellectual property rights subsisting or which may in the future subsist in the Wheelchair Super League or any other leagues or competitions organised or controlled by the RFL and in any logo relating to or connected with any such league or competitions (the League Intellectual Property Rights) is and shall be remain the sole property of the RFL.

All BWhRLSL games must be recorded by the home team and uploaded onto RFL Video “Hub”

## **3. TABLES**

**3.1** The BWhRLSL table shall be compiled by the RFL. The positions in which shall be determined by the number of points gained with points being awarded as follows: two points for each Match won; and one point for each Match drawn.

**3.2** The Club with the highest number of points shall be at the top of the league table and the Club with the lowest shall be at the bottom. Where Clubs have an equal number of points their relative positions shall be determined by points difference so that the Club having the greater points difference is placed above the Club with the lesser points difference. The points difference is calculated by subtracting the points scored against the Club from the points scored by the Club. If that still leads to a tie, then the Club with the greater points percentage during the Season will be placed in the higher position. The points percentage is calculated by dividing the number of points scored by a Club by the number of points it concedes and multiplying by 100. If the positions are still equal, positions will be determined by the toss of a coin which shall be carried out at such time and place as the RFL shall direct and those Clubs concerned shall be entitled to witness the toss.

**3.3** The notional scores in forfeited games shall be 24-0 and a points deduction of 1 point. The League and clubs will work together to ensure, where possible, games are played. Alternative options for rearrangement should be explored before a forfeit is awarded.

## **4. CUP FIXTURES**

**4.1** In accordance with Operational Rule B3:2:2 Cup ties will take precedence over League Matches.

**4.1** Only players who have played 1 or more Cup fixtures for their respective team in the current season are eligible to participate in the final of any WhRLSL Cup competition. The WhRLSL Management group have the discretion to allow players eligibility who have not met the 1 match criteria upon reasons presented by clubs.

## **5. STRUCTURE OF COMPETITION**

**5.1** The RFL at its sole discretion will determine the structure of the competition including its format and size, any play-off structure and matters relating to promotion and relegation.

**5.2** If two or more Clubs finish level on points, at the end of the Season, the application of competition rule 3.2 will decide which team finishes above the other.

**5.3** If a Club is expelled or suspended, its record will be expunged, irrespective of how many games that Club has played.

**5.4** The play-off format for the Premier Division through to Division 4 will be as follows: 1st v 4th and 2nd v 3rd with the highest placed team having home advantage in the semi-final. There will be no play-offs in any other division.

**5.5** Only players who have played 2 or more League fixtures for their respective team are eligible to participate in the play-off stages of the competition. The Wheelchair Rugby League Management Group have the discretion to allow players eligibility who have not met the 2 match criteria upon reasons presented by clubs.

**5.6** The competition structure and format will be determined by the RFL prior to the start of each Season.

**5.7** The top 4 will then play in the Play Off Semi-Finals (1v4, 2v3), highest placed team at home, unless a central venue is provided, and then the winners will contest the Grand Final at a neutral venue.

## **6. MEMBERSHIP**

**6.1** Membership of the BWhRLSL is open to all clubs playing wheelchair rugby league who are capable of meeting an Annual Entry Criteria as specified by the WhRL Management Group.

**6.2** Applications from new clubs must be submitted in writing to the Competition Officer prior to the WhRL Grand Final each year. Membership shall be granted to a club for one season only and all clubs must reapply for membership each year.

**6.3** Each club will be required to ensure that the Volunteers listed below are appropriately qualified (where applicable) and registered on GameDay:

- Coaches
- Club Welfare Officer
- First Aiders
- Game Day Manager
- Club Secretary
- Club Chair

Note: The same person may occupy more than one role

## **7. START AND END DATE OF THE COMPETITION**

The RFL shall determine the commencement date of the competition and the date upon which it shall cease. These dates will fit between the 1st March and 30th November in any year.

## **8. PLAYER REGISTRATIONS**

**8.1** All players shall annually register to the Club using the RFL Gameday system. The League will circulate a link to the registration portal to the Clubs to commence the registration process.

**8.2** Only players that are aged 16 and over are eligible to play in the BWhRSL. Dispensation requests will be considered for players 14 years of age however these will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be annually reviewed.

**8.3** Clubs will be allowed to register a maximum of 15 players at any given time and their primary registration must be with the BWhRSL Team.

**8.4** A WhRSL Club may, in addition to the 15-player limit, register and play up to an additional two players in its squad, provided that such player(s) have not been registered with any Club on the LeagueNet system in the previous three years. Such players will be known for the purposes of these Rules, as "Talent Transfer Players".

**8.5** All players must be registered on the RFL GameDay system to be eligible to play on that weekend.

## **9. TRANSFERS**

**9.1** Clubs may register or transfer players from other clubs, using GameDay. It is the responsibility of the club the player is moving to, to initiate the transfer. The club the player is moving from will need to approve any outgoing transfer requests on GameDay. Clubs will have 7 days to notify the Competition Officer of any objections to a transfer being approved. After this point, if no objections are raised the Competition Officer will approve the transfer on the club's behalf. The player has final sign off of the transfer. The process must be completed in full, including player sign off, before a player plays. The club shall follow any other policies issued by the RFL in relation to the registration of players.

**9.2** All players must fulfil all financial obligations to their current Club before any transfer to another Club will be permitted. This also applies to a player wishing to sign for a different Club in future seasons.

**9.3** The deadline date for transferring of players shall be the 31st of August. For the avoidance of doubt after this date Players must play for the Club who holds their primary registration unless an application for dual registration has already been processed by the Competition Administrator.

## **10. BWHRLSL RESERVES**

**10.1** All BWhRLSL clubs will operate a reserves team to both remove the need for dual registration as well as give playing opportunities to all with large extended squads.

**10.2** Reserves fixtures are to be hosted prior to Super League fixtures, are development in focus, reduced times and will reflect the fixture played in the main SL fixture.

**10.3** Reserves games are 60 minutes in length, 2 x 30 minute halves, wheelchair rugby league rules.

**10.4** The reserves competition means, no dual registration will be allowed in the BWhRLSL.

## **11. FIXTURES**

**11.1** All fixtures should be played as per the fixture list unless an alternative date mutually agreeable by both teams and the Competition Officer can be sought. Any club wishing to rearrange a fixture must consult their opponents in the first instance to discuss any changes. Should an agreement be reached, details of the change must be confirmed with the Competition Officer.

**11.2** Where programmed into the fixture programme, backlog dates should not be considered as a free weekend and teams should be prepared to be allocated fixtures on these dates.

**11.3** No friendly fixtures shall be arranged on a League fixture date without prior approval of the Competition Officer. The details of any friendly fixtures that are arranged, after approval, must be confirmed with the Competition Officer.

**11.4** Clubs must accept fixtures given at seven days' notice by the Competition Officer.

**11.5** Subject to WhRL Management Group discretion any clubs failing to fulfil a fixture in the WhRL SL, may be automatically relegated irrespective of League placing.

**11.6** Any club failing to fulfil a fixture must pay reasonable expenses to the non-offending club, as determined by the WhRL Management Group. This may include the cost of hiring the facility, refreshments and the match officials full fee and expenses.

**11.7** In addition to the sanctions imposed as outlined in rule 8.5, any club failing to fulfil the corresponding away league fixture after their opposition has travelled to them may be asked to compensate their opposition up to a maximum of £500. This is to offset the cost of travel incurred from the first fixture, facility rental hire and/or loss of match day revenue from the second fixture.

**11.8** Any club which fails to notify their opponents of its inability to raise a team the day before the scheduled kick-off, shall also be liable to pay any expenses, up to a maximum of £50, which their opponents may incur, including kit washing, or medical costs such as strapping.

**11.9** In the case of a home club failing to fulfil a fixture, a visiting club that has travelled, may claim up to a maximum of £100 towards transport costs.

## **12. POSTPONEMENTS**

**12.1** Postponements will not be considered because of injuries, or any other matter not considered exceptional.

**12.2** In the event of the home club suspecting that its facility will not be fit for play owing to damage or other cause, the home club must immediately call a Match Official on the approved list recognised by the RFL to conduct a ground inspection. If the Match Official states the ground is not fit for play, and in their opinion, there is no chance of it being so before the scheduled kick off, then that decision must be communicated immediately to the visiting club, appointed Match Official and the Competition Officer. Any club failing to fulfil this instruction may be guilty of Misconduct and in addition to any sanction will be responsible for the reimbursement of reasonable travel expenses incurred by any Match Official or club not so notified.

**12.3** When a game is unable to go ahead as scheduled, BOTH teams should notify the Competition Officer via email to confirm if the game is being postponed until a later date or conceded and the points claimed by the opposing side. As per rule 3.3 alternative options for rearrangement should be explored before a forfeit is awarded.

**12.4** In the case of both a no-fault or mutually agreed postponement, if clubs cannot agree a new date within 14 days of the original postponement, then the Competition Officer will issue a new date for the fixture. This will be on the next available date when a suitable facility is available. Saturday, or if there are no Saturday dates available the fixture will be set for a midweek evening. If the new fixture is not played as instructed by the Competition Officer, the points will be awarded to the non-offending team.

## **13. MATCH DAY OPERATIONS**

### **13.1 TV Broadcast**

As ever, any Fixtures may be subject to change and there will also be an expectation of cooperation with Our League any bona fide, RFL appointed broadcaster requirements.

**13.2** To maintain the continuity of the playing programme the Competition Administrator shall be empowered, if necessary, to bring forward to an earlier date fixtures scheduled for later in the season.

**13.3** Any Club playing in a match must comply with any match day operations manual that is issued by the RFL.

### **13.4 Squad Declarations**

Each Club participating in the WhRSL must declare a squad, using GameDay, of up to 12 Players by noon, on the Friday prior to the Match, unless directed otherwise by the RFL.

### **13.5 Squad Amendment Process**

Clubs, officials, and coaches shall comply with the squad amendment process as directed by the RFL from time to time.

## **13.6 Contacting Opponents and Kit Obligations**

**13.6.1** In accordance with the Operational Rules it is the responsibility of the home club, during the week preceding a game, to contact both its opponents and the relevant Match Officials regarding team colours and ground directions by no later than 8pm on the Thursday before the following Saturday's fixture. Away clubs should acknowledge any correspondence received and confirm their intention to travel, no later than 24 hours before the scheduled kick off time.

**13.6.2** In the event there is a clash of colours the away team must wear an alternative strip.

## **13.7 Team Sizes and Interchanges**

A maximum of 8 players may be named for each side taking part in a Super League fixture, play-off games and final. There may be a maximum of 8 interchanges during a BWHRSL game.

## **13.8 Technical Areas**

All non-playing personnel and interchanges must remain in the designated technical area throughout the Match. They are not permitted to station themselves around the field, other than when managing a player, who has been removed from play, or when time management principles have been implemented (other than tracking physios and the tag collector in line with laws of the game) and are subject at all times to the control of the Match Officials.

## **13.9 Match Footage**

Unless directed otherwise, the home Club shall make a complete, unedited recording of each Match which the RFL may request a copy of.

## **13.10 Medical Requirements**

**13.10.1** It is the requirement of each home club to ensure that a first aider attends each game. The first aider should make themselves known to the Match Official before the start of any Match and shall remain for a minimum of 15 minutes after the end of the Game and shall speak directly with a designated Official from both clubs, if necessary, to ensure that the correct reporting paperwork is completed. In the event that there is no first aider then the Match Official will not permit a game to take place.

**13.10.2** First aiders should be listed on the team sheet and are required to register on the GameDay system as a volunteer.

**13.10.3** In the event a player sustains an injury to the head or displays signs or symptoms of concussion, the Match Official will stop the game and ask for the first aider to attend to them. If the first aider suspects concussion the player MUST be removed from the field of play and remain off the field of play. If the player refuses to follow the first aider's advice, then the Match Officials can hold up play until the player follows the instruction of the first aider. Advice for managing concussion can be found [HERE](#). The RFL is supportive of and follows the SRA concussion guidance – please read through the guidance in full [HERE](#) and ensure they are applied to matches and training at all times.

## **13.11 Reporting Injuries and Concussion**

In the event there is a serious injury or concussion at a Match this must be reported using the GameDay system. Reports are added in the post-game section which is the same area as where results are added. It is imperative that any head injuries are reported on the system as this information must be provided to the insurers.



### **13.12 Post Match Arrangements**

**13.12.1** The home Club shall be responsible for supplying all the competing players, Club officials and appointed Match Officials with a suitable post-match meal.

**13.12.2** Team Sheet and Reporting Results. Home team is responsible for completing match report & match official grading.

**13.12.3** Official team sheets must be completed via GameDay correctly before the commencement of matches and shall be completed by an official from each club no later than 1 hour before kick off.

**13.12.4** The home club, in consultation with the Match Official and designated officer from the opposition, must agree the result immediately on completion of the game and enter the result on to GameDay within 60 minutes. Failure to do so may, at the management groups discretion result in the loss of competition points.

**13.12.5** It is the responsibility of both clubs to ensure that the team sheet information, including point scorers and result information, is entered on the GameDay system within 48 hours following the completion of the game. Failure to do so may, at the management groups discretion result in the loss of competition points.

### **13.13 ABANDONMENT OF GAMES**

**13.13.1** If a game is abandoned with more than three-quarters of the playing time elapsed, the result shall stand unless otherwise determined by the RFL. If less than three-quarters of the playing time has elapsed the RFL, at its sole discretion, shall determine whether the result will stand, whether the game should be replayed or otherwise.

## **14. DISCIPLINE, SUSPENSIONS AND FINES**

**14.1** A WhRL discipline panel is in place to deal with all discipline matters arising, in accordance with section D of the Operational Rules. The disciplinary panel shall have the full power to expel, suspend and/or fine any club, player, official or other person, subject to the Operational Rules, found guilty of misconduct and/or breach of these rules and/or breach of the Operational Rules and to order them to meet any costs incurred.

**14.2** A written report of a Match Official on the misconduct of any club, player or official must be sent via email to the Competition Officer with a copy to the offending club for receipt inside 48 hours from the conclusion of the game.

**14.3** Reports of brawling – defined as three or more players involved – should be sent via email by the Match Official, for receipt within 48 hours of a game's conclusion, to the Competition Officer. Separate copies of the report will then be forwarded to the clubs concerned.

**14.4** Any club which does not receive, within 48 hours, a report outlining a dismissal or brawl having occurred should contact the Competition Officer immediately. The failure of a club to receive a written report will not prevent action being dealt by the relevant discipline committee.

**14.5** A reported club, player, official or any other person may, to defend an allegation of misconduct, send a letter for receipt by the Competition Officer within seven days of the date of the match. The club or such persons may in their own defence request a personal appearance and/or bring witnesses and/or submit written mitigation, to the hearing, if they notify the Competition Officer within seven days of the alleged offence. A £20 administrative fee will be charged for any personal hearings or written submissions that result in a guilty verdict. This will be added afterwards to any fines that are issued or waived provided that the appellant or their designated representative attends in person and are found not guilty.

**14.6** Unedited video evidence shall be an accepted method through which to defend or confirm the alleged actions that have been reported to the committee by a Match Official.

**14.7** Should a case of alleged assault by a player, club official or spectator be lodged it will be reported to the Competition Officer by a Match Official. The Match Official will then be instructed to make themselves available to the disciplinary committee, for the purposes of interview, due notice of which shall be given in writing. A Match Official shall in such circumstances be entitled to claim reasonable travel expenses.

**14.8** A player's suspension shall commence on the Saturday following the meeting at which the suspension was imposed, with the exception of any suspension of six matches or more which shall take immediate effect.

**14.9** All organised competition games, (including WhRL fixtures, and RFL representative games) provided that they were arranged prior to the player's offence may be counted towards the list of suspended games.

**14.10** A suspended player is not permitted to play in any other game of Rugby League until any fines are paid and their suspension is served, and the completed Notification of Games Served Form has been completed, received, and approved by the Competition Officer. Any player or club violating this rule will be fined not less than £100. The offending player may also incur an additional suspension and will not be able to play until such time as the fine is paid. In the event of a game having been won by a club fielding a player under suspension then the competition points gained shall be forfeited automatically. The WhRL Management Group, should it deem appropriate, reserves the right to apply other sanctions which may include a club's suspension or expulsion from the competition.

**14.11** All fines, payable to the RFL must be settled within 28 days and must be forwarded to the Competition Officer. Failure to meet this obligation shall result in the fine being doubled automatically. If a further seven days elapse without receipt of payment, then the club's fixtures will be suspended.

## **15 APPEALS**

**15.1** All appeals against disciplinary sanctions imposed by the WhRL are to be dealt with by an independent RFL appointed panel.

**15.2** Clubs who have the right to appeal may do so within 7 days of a decision made. A £40.00 fee, payable to the "RFL", should be submitted together with an accompanying letter outlining the reason the appeal is sought. This must be forwarded to the Competition Officer

**15.3** An appeal by a club may be based solely on the following grounds: a) the finding of guilt or b) the severity of sentence imposed.

**15.4** No member of the Discipline Panel actively involved in a decision taken at the initial hearing other than the Competition Officer - who has no voting rights - shall be permitted to adjudicate on matters which will be the subject of appeal.

**15.5** Adjudication by the Appeals Panel precludes the right of individual players or their clubs towards seeking a further representation.

