

## TEAM ENTRIES

1. Clubs wishing to enter teams into either of the 'grades' must advise the Club Rugby Administrator by March 10 2023:  
WRFU may refuse entry if;
  - It considers a team is unlikely to be competitive
  - It believes a team may not complete a Competition
  - It believes that participation of a team is not in the best interests of the Game of Rugby

## COMPETITIONS

2. All matches shall be played under the control of the WRFU.  
The WRFU shall arrange all matches, dates and grounds reserving itself the right to transfer any match from one date to another and from one ground to another when necessary, such transfers to be notified by the WRFU to the Clubs concerned.
3. All matches played in the WRFU competitions are to be played under NZ Rugby Union Laws of the Game of Rugby Football rulings and in accordance with relevant NZRU Domestic Law variations that are applicable. For all Premier matches and for Senior semi-finals and finals matches a team is to consist of no more than 15 players and up to seven replacements/substitutes. For Senior competition matches other than semi-finals and finals, subject to agreement by both Captains and advising the match referee prior to the game, senior teams may have more than seven replacements/substitutes. This must be mutually agreed between the teams.
4. All competition grades will electronically record team lists and results via the New Zealand Rugby "MyRugby" app.
  - Team Managers are required to submit their playing 22 via the app prior to their match kicking off
  - During the match, team managers are to record points scored and who scored the points via the app
  - The referee will also record the score during the match and will only be consulted when there is a disagreement regarding the final score.
  - At the conclusion of the match the following will take place:
    - Both team managers meet and agree on the score
    - Both team managers submit the result of the match via the app

The deadline for match results to be submitted is Monday 9am following the Saturday fixture

## POINTS SYSTEM

5. The following points system will apply for each match in all Premier and Senior matches:
  - a. Win 4 points
  - b. Draw 2 points
  - c. Loss 0 points
  - d. Loss by 7 points or less 1 point
  - e. 4 tries or more 1 point
  - f. Default 5 points to opposing team

## PLAYER REGISTRATION, CLUB TRANSFERS AND OVERSEAS CLEARANCES

6. In order to play in Whanganui RFU competitions the players must be registered in the WRFU. Requests for exemptions to this rule are to be forwarded to the WRFU (such exemption requests would include students returning 'home' during the 'academic break' – the Club would know the student is coming home and could seek an exemption through the WRFU.
7. All players must be registered and be accounted for on the New Zealand Rugby Union's database. Any club playing an un-registered player will forfeit the match and the maximum five (5) championship points shall be awarded to the opposing team. The WRFU may also impose other penalties as they see fit. If the offending team lost the game the match result will stand but the offending team will incur a penalty of the maximum five (5) championship points.
8. All players must be registered prior to playing in any WRFU club competition game. This applies to all grades. Any new player turning up on match-day must be registered on sporty - via your Club registrations officer. Once players are registered, the administrators will need to move them into a team on 'Teambuilder' in sporty. Only when they have been placed into a team on teambuilder will they appear in the Game Day App and can then be added to a team sheet.
9. A player returning to Whanganui having played rugby overseas must complete full international clearance: that is, outgoing clearance from the overseas National Rugby Union and incoming clearance from the NZRU prior to registering with a Whanganui Club and playing in any WRFU Club Rugby Competition. Full completion of overseas clearance must be received by the WRFU from NZ Rugby no later than 5:00pm on the Friday prior to the playing of any game of rugby union under the control of the Whanganui Rugby Union. Any team playing a player who fails to provide an overseas clearance in accordance with this NZR shall be liable to the penalties outlined in paragraph 15.
10. No player who has taken part in a 2023 season competition fixture for a Club (by being named on a team scorecard) shall be allowed to play in a competition fixture for another Club unless that player has first been transferred to the new club (and this transfer approved by their former Club) using the NZRU on-line player transfer system.  
Any player that has been declared to WRFU as owing fees or gear to their existing club from the 2022 season by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2021 shall not be able to play for a new Club until the issue of debt is resolved.
11. A transfer policy will apply, where a player has played for their club (by being named on a team scorecard) and then transfers to another WRFU Club, that the player will undergo a two-week stand down (2 competition fixtures) from the WRFU Club Rugby Competition prior to that player taking the field for his new Club. The Union will consider an exemption to this policy on application to the WRFU with regards to extenuating circumstances such as a player moving to a new area, or where both clubs mutually agree to the two-week stand down being waived. The two-week stand down period commences on the date the online transfer request is made via the NZ Rugby Registration database. A player can play for the new club after all outstanding obligations are met and when he or she has served the stand down period.
12. A player new to a club cannot join that club and play for a team during or immediately prior to that club team's involvement in the competition play-offs. That player must have joined and played for that club team at least three weeks prior to the completion of the competition round(s).
13. A player is considered a 'new player' if he or she has not been registered with that club via the NZ Rugby Registration database in the current season prior to the three-week deadline. Any player who is injured at the commencement of the season shall not be considered new to club provided they are registered to their particular club prior to the commencement of the season. Any team playing a player who has not been consented to by the WRFU in accordance with this rule shall be liable to the penalties outlined in paragraph 15.

14. A new or unregistered player is deemed to be registered if they have completed a NZRU online registration form prior to taking the field of play and this registration has been approved/confirmed by the club administrator via the online registration system prior to that player taking the field.

15.

**Penalties:**

Points deduction, and/or the offending player and/or team shall be liable to suspension by the WRFU, and/or to forfeit the match, and that winning points be awarded to the non-offending team. If a win is recorded then it stands, minus any points accrued by the offending team. If not, a 0-0 (5 points) win will be recorded.

16. Clubs with Premier sides must name 10 players at the start of the season in their squads, none of whom can play in the Senior grade. Also, any Heartland Players or Players who have had Heartland experience or higher honours cannot play in the Senior Grade without dispensation from the WRFU.

17. To play in a Club finals fixture (i.e. Semi-finals and Final) a player must have played at least four games for their team in that grade. The exception being; players can play in a higher-grade final(s) even if they have not played four games in that grade (i.e. senior player may be "called up" to play in the premier final(s) but a premier player who has not played at least four games in the senior competition cannot play in the senior final(s). In the case of serious player injury (not able to play the required four games) or the arrival of a player late in the season, Clubs may request a dispensation from the WRFU. Clubs must apply for any Dispensations by the Wednesday 9am of the Semi-final or Final. Teams may be granted up to 3 dispensations at the WRFU's discretion.

18. A player may be registered for a Wanganui School team or Wanganui Metro Colts and one Wanganui Rugby Club team in the same season.

19. Each year, Players may register to the Club of their choice. Players wishing to transfer from another Provincial Union to our Union do not require a clearance if transferring 'out of season' - which is prior to the start of the WRFU Club Rugby competition. However, if a player is transferring from another Provincial Union to our Union 'in season' (after the first WRFU Club Rugby competition game) then the transfer policy will apply. The player must have a mandatory stand down of two playing Saturdays from the date the online transfer request is made via the NZ Rugby Registration database. The Operations Committee may consider an exemption to this policy on application to the WRFU with regards to extenuating circumstances such as a player moving to the region for work.

## REFEREES

20. All Clubs competing must accept the referees appointed to the respective matches.

21. The referee and the WRFU shall be sole judge of the fitness of any ground to be played upon on any day. If s/he decides that it is unfit, s/he may remove the game to any unoccupied ground that is conveniently situated or may declare the match postponed, the date of playing off to be fixed by the WRFU.

## PLAYING FIELDS - GENERAL

22. All playing fields are to be marked in accordance with The Laws of the Game. The playing enclosure is to have 'spectator control barrier' (i.e. a barrier, fencing or roping) must be present to stop spectators encroaching onto the playing enclosure). In addition, to assist in the control of team reserves and management and ensure spectators have the best opportunity to have an unimpeded view of the matches, the following 'areas/facilities' are to be provided for all Premier and senior fixtures:
- a. Warm Up Area. Ideally teams are to 'warm-up' on a grassed area adjacent to the playing enclosure. Where such areas are not available, teams are permitted to warm-up immediately outside the 'in goal' area. Reserves are permitted to warm-up immediately outside the 'in goal' area whilst the match is in progress.
  - b. Reserves Seating Area. Suitable seating is to be placed just inside the 'spectator control barrier' on which each teams reserves and team management are to sit. The team reserves and team officials are to remain seated on this seating except when warming up or going onto the field of play or performing official functions of water boy, touch judges, coordinating team substitutions or medical staff. (i.e. Coaches, managers and reserves are not to wander up and down the sidelines or behind the in goal areas). **A maximum of 10 (including reserves)** are permitted from each team inside the control barrier.
  - c. Medical Staff/St Johns Attendant. Seating is to be provided just inside the 'spectator control barrier' for St Johns attendant(s) and/or team medical staff. St Johns attendants and team medical staff are to remain in these seats unless attending to injured players or match officials.
  - d. Team Management. Unless performing the duties of water boy, touch judges, co-ordinating team substitutions or medical staff; team management must remain **seated** in the "Reserves Seating Area" or behind the spectator control barrier.
  - e. Walkways. When using the Racecourse fields, players, management and spectators must use the walkways provided. The first mentioned team in the draw each week is to assist the caretaker with putting out the walkways. Both teams are to assist putting the walkways away.

## TROPHIES

23. All cups, shields and trophies are the property of the Whanganui Rugby Union, they must be delivered to the Chief Executive Officer of the Union no later than the 30<sup>th</sup> April in each year.

## PROTESTS

24. Any protest in connection with any match/player under the control of the WRFU must be lodged in writing (which includes all relevant evidence) to the WRFU not later than 48 hours following the scheduled completion of the fixture. The WRFU is to make a ruling. Should the Club(s) affected by this ruling wish to 'challenge' the decision of the WRFU, then the affected Club(s) have 24 hours from being notified of the WRFU ruling, then the entire matter is to be heard by the WRFU.

## RANKING OF TEAMS

25. In the event there are two teams on the same number of competition points at the conclusion of the competition, the highest ranked team shall be determined by the following steps in order.
- The winner of the game between the two teams
  - If two games played the team with the most wins of the two games played between those teams will be considered higher.
  - If two draws or one win each; the team with the highest positive points differential (for/against) of the games played between the two teams shall be deemed higher
  - If even; the team with the highest overall positive points differential (for/against) across the entire competition scored shall be the winner
  - If even; the team with the highest overall points scored across the competition shall be the winner
  - If even; a coin toss will take place
26. In the event there are three teams or more on the same number of competition points at the conclusion of the competition, the highest ranked team shall be determined by the following steps in order.
- The team with the highest positive points differential (for/against) of the games played between the teams shall be deemed higher
  - If even; the team with the highest overall positive points differential (for/against) across the entire competition shall be the winner
  - If even; the team with the highest overall points scored across the competition shall be the winner
  - A random draw to determine the winner will take place

## DETERMINING THE WINNER

27. The following process is to be used to determine the winner, if both teams are on equal points at the end of regulation playing time:
- a. At the conclusion of regulation playing time, there is to be a five-minute break.
  - b. 10 minutes' extra time each way is then to be played (i.e. 20 minutes playing time in total, with a five-minute break between each ten minute periods). The team with the most points is the winner.
  - c. If still tied after extra time then there is to be another five-minute break and a sudden death 5 minutes each way is to be played with the first team to score being the winner.
  - d. As this 'extended' game is the same game; the normal substitution rules are to be followed. That is, there is to be a maximum of seven replacements/substitutes during the game.
  - e. If still tied after sudden death the team scoring the most tries in the match is the winner.
  - f. If teams have scored the same number of tries in the match the first team to have scored a try in the match will be declared the winner.
  - g. If teams are still equal then a toss of the coin will decide the winner.

## MATCH BALL

28. Only Leslie Rugby 'Test Match Size 5' regulation rugby balls are to be used for all Premier and Senior grade matches. The specified size, weight and air pressure of a ball is outlined in The Laws of the Game.
29. For all Premier and senior games each team is responsible for providing at least one match ball. The WRFU Office will provide match balls for games at Cooks Gardens or Spriggens Park on Finals Day.

## DEFAULTS

30. Any Club defaulting a fixture must advise the following three parties as soon as possible, but **no later than 12 noon on the day preceding the scheduled fixture:**
  - a. Opposition Club Captain.
  - b. WRFU Office.
  - c. WRFU Referees Tyrone Kemp – [tyrone.kemp@whanganuirugby.co.nz](mailto:tyrone.kemp@whanganuirugby.co.nz)

Failure to observe the above will incur a fine of \$200 (incl GST).

31. The non-defaulting team is to be awarded five (5) competition points and
  - a. an average of 'points for' of all other matches played in that grade by the defaulting team in all its other qualifying round matches, and
  - b. an average of 'points against' of all other matches played in that grade by the defaulting team in all its other qualifying round matches.

The average points need to be awarded as it may have an effect on the 'points for and against' when determining the teams in the play-offs.
32. If a team defaults two games in the playing season representatives of the Club concerned will be asked to appear before the WRFU to explain the situation. The WRFU subsequently may impose a fine of up to \$300 (incl. GST) and/or deduct competition points.
33. If a team defaults to an opposition, the next time these teams are drawn to play against each other in that season, they are to play at the home location of the 'team defaulted to'.
34. The WRFU is to rule on any matches cancelled or rescheduled because of weather or unplayable grounds.

## JUDICIARY PROCEDURES

### Procedure when a player is ordered off

35. A flow diagram depicting the process and procedures to be followed should a player be ordered from the field of play is at Annex B.

### Player Appeals

36. A player adversely affected by a decision of the WRFU Judicial Committee may lodge an appeal to the WRFU. An appeal must be lodged within seven days of the player receiving written notification of the decision of the Committee. An appeal to the WRFU must be accompanied by a deposit of \$250 (incl GST). The WRFU may at its discretion, order that any deposit paid in lodging the Appeal, or any part of it, be refunded.

### Sin Bin Rules

37. A player sin-binned on two occasions in a season is to be cautioned by means of a letter from the WRFU that a further sin-binning could result in an additional penalty no less than the mandatory one match suspension. A player sin-binned on three occasions in a season is to be referred to the sighting officers to decide on a case by case basis whether a stand down of one competition playing day is necessary. If so the one competition playing day commences after the conclusion of the match the Player received his third 'yellow card (i.e. sin binning). For each sin binning over three sin binning's the player penalty will be decided on a case by case basis by the Judiciary Officers.

## **END OF RULES**

*THESE RULES WERE REVISED IN FEBRUARY 2023*

## Annexes:

- A. Process for dealing with unruly incidents
- B. Flow diagram of procedure and processes to be followed if a player is ordered from the field
- C. Blue Card Process
- D. Full layout – Ropes area of Playing Field diagram.

## ANNEX A TO 2023 CLUB RUGBY RULES

### PROCESS FOR DEALING WITH UNRULY BEHAVIOUR INCIDENTS

In 2023, the following process and procedures are to be followed by players, team management and referees when dealing with incidents of unruly behaviour including sledging, racial abuse and verbal criticism of players and/or the referees. The referee's decisions shall be dealt with by the referee under Rule 10 - Foul Play. The referee shall act on his own observations or by referral from appointed touch judges or a team captain. The steps:

- (1) The referee halts the game and advises the applicable Captain the need for corrective action to be taken.
- (2) The applicable team Captain seeks assistance from his team management to rectify the problem.
- (3) Game continues but if the same/similar inappropriate behaviour continues:
  - (a) The referee halts the game and again advises the applicable team Captain of the need for corrective action to be taken or the game will be called off.
  - (b) The applicable team Captain again seeks assistance from his team management to rectify the issues and confirms that if this inappropriate behaviour continues the game will be called off.
- (4) Game continues.
- (5) If the same/similar inappropriate behaviour continues – the Referee calls the game off.
- (6) If a game is called off the CoC Operations Committee will decide the allocation of match points after taking into consideration all relevant factors.



FLOW DIAGRAM OF PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES TO BE FOLLOWED IF A PLAYER IS ORDERED FROM THE FIELD OF PLAY (I.E. RED CARDED)

Game played – player ordered from the field of play for act of dangerous play, foul play or misconduct



Referee submits written report to WRFU by email or hand delivered to WRFU Offices within 48 hours of the match (NZRU Rules for Disciplinary Hearings rule 5) or at such time as necessary in the circumstances (NZRU rule 5)



Written requests/submissions may be made to WRFU within 48 hours of the match by the player ordered off; play victim; players representative, Team Manager, Referee or the Referees' Association requesting or giving reasons why the matter should be referred to the WRFU Judicial Committee to convene a disciplinary hearing



WRFU office receives reports. Refers to book of permanent record and notes any previous ordering off and penalties in last 5 years (NZRU Rules for Disciplinary Hearings rule 137). Copies of the report and any submissions to the Disciplinary Review Officer



All reports and submission forwarded to the Disciplinary Review Officer within 72 hours of the match.  
Disciplinary Review Officer directs:



Automatic Suspension of 2 scheduled games.

Suspension period reduced.

Refer matter to WRFU Judicial Committee for hearing because of request / seriousness /offence type or for any other reason.

**PROCESS SHOULD MATTER BE REFERRED TO WRFU JUDICIAL COMMITTEE**

WRFU Chairman Judicial Committee receives directive for full Disciplinary Hearing



WRFU office contacts player or Club advising time, date and place of hearing. (Hearing normally at 6.30 pm at WRFU Office the next Wednesday following when the player was ordered off).  
Written record to be kept of who was informed when such action was undertaken (NZRU Rules for Disciplinary Hearings rule 7)



WRFU Judicial Committee Hearing convened  
Player should be represented at hearing by Team Manager, Club Official, support person or similar (NZRU Rules for Disciplinary Hearings rule 15)



Case Dismissed.  
Player, Club/School and WRAA notified in writing

Facts admitted or proved – player awarded penalty  
NZRU Rules for Disciplinary Hearings Form D raised  
File returned to WRFU office



Player, Club/School and WRAA notified in writing

## BLUE CARD PROCESS

Player receives a blue card during a match.

This includes players who are awarded Blue Card by the ref directly and those who are removed by the team with suspected concussion. This ensures that all players who are concussed or suspected of concussion enter the Graduated Return to Play (GRTP) protocol.



Referee submits name(s) to PU post-match.



Player and club receives a letter from the Union (Player may have already seen a doctor prior to this or the letter will suggest this happens – NZR do not pay for this and it is not compulsory)



Player completes the compulsory rest period, ensures asymptomatic and GRTP.



Player sees doctor after contact stage of GRTP but before playing.



Medical clearance received by Provincial Union



Player cleared to play



1. This diagram clearly demonstrates how a rugby playing field should be roped off.
2. The minimum distance from the halfway sideline to the rope should be 3.5 metres.
3. The minimum distance between the dead - ball line corners and the ropes should be 1 metre.
4. Where cars have access to the ground, they shall park at least 10 metres from the fence line defining the dead ball line.
5. Each club is responsible for ensuring that the above guidelines are strictly adhered to, in an effort to eliminate the possibility of unsavoury behavioural problems at WRFU controlled rugby fixtures.  
Failure to comply with the above guidelines may result in the WRFU declaring the ground unsuitable as a match venue
6. The host club is responsible for setting up the grounds at the racecourse and Spriggens Park on game day.