

Modifications to the English Clubs Championships (ECC) Regulations relating to the playing of league rugby at Level 8 and below in Somerset

The regulations relating to the playing of league rugby in Somerset will be modified in so far as matches played at Level 8 (Somerset Premier League) and below (together “the modified leagues”) are concerned. The modified leagues are subject to all ECC Regulations in so far as these are not varied by or inconsistent with these Regulations. The modifications are:

1. Second, third and lower teams of a Club may play in the modified leagues with the approval of and at the level agreed by the South West Organising Committee (SWOC), who shall consider the advice of the Somerset County RFU Limited (SCRFU).
2. A second, third or lower team may not be promoted above Level 8. In the event of such a team winning the Level 8 league or getting into a Play Off position then the next highest placed eligible side in that league shall, subject to the agreement of SWOC, take its place.
3. At Levels 8 & 9 all players must be registered with their club in accordance with the Player Registration Regulations.
4. At Level 10 and below teams may contain players who are not registered with that club. They should however be made up of bona fide club members; although if this is not possible then players may be borrowed from other clubs to make up the numbers and encourage participation in the game. However such teams may not knowingly play players holding Effective Registration with another club at Level 8 or above.
5. Notwithstanding point 4 above and subject to point 6 below clubs at all levels are encouraged to continue to register their players.
6. Players registered with a club who play at Level 4 or above cannot play in a modified league. Should members of a club which plays at level 4 or above wish to participate in league rugby at level 10 and below then they may choose not to be registered with their club.
Exception: Where a club gains promotion from Level 5 to Level 4 players registered with that club may continue to play in the modified leagues for the first season after such promotion.
7. If a team at level 10 and below justifiably cannot field a front row then the match will proceed with uncontested scrums. No league points will be deducted providing the fixture is honoured.
8. Two teams from the same club may not play in the same league. Subject to this, and point 14, normal promotion and relegation rules will apply except that a team may decline promotion with the approval of SWOC; who in reaching their decision shall consider advice from SCRFU. Should a team decline promotion then point 13 will apply. For the avoidance of doubt the next highest placed side in that league has no automatic right to promotion in such circumstance.
9. Where the first or higher team of a club does not have a match (but does have a lower team league fixture) on an appointed day then the club must field a genuine team(s) commensurate with the level of match(es) being played. That will

- include situations where a club fields a lower team but cancels a higher team's fixture on the same day. Clubs are reminded that such first team (or any other team in the Club) may also suffer penalty for non-compliance. The League Secretary may enquire into such circumstances and impose any sanction in accordance with Game Regulations.
- 10 In the interests of encouraging participation in the game at Level 10 or below the captains may agree prior to a match to more than 3 replacements being used by the teams in any match. At Level 10 and below teams with surplus players are encouraged to lend the opposition surplus players to make up even numbers per side.
 - 11 At Level 10 and below match result cards must be completed and posted to First Eleven in accordance with the SWOC Administrative Instructions although the names of participating players may be omitted.
 - 12 Where a team finishes in a promotion or relegation spot but cannot be promoted or relegated by virtue of these regulations (e.g. because a club team would gain promotion to the same league as another side in their club) then SWOC (having taken advice from the SCRFU) will make appropriate arrangements for promotion or relegation within the leagues affected. In the case of relegation causing two teams from the same club to be in the lowest league then if no other suitable arrangement is appropriate this could include two sides from the same club being in the same league.
 - 13 Where anomalies occur within the modified leagues that are not provided for within these regulations or that are contrary to the objectives of providing competitive, structured and enjoyable rugby to relevant teams of Somerset clubs then SWOC (having taken advice from SCRFU) reserves the power to make appropriate arrangements to fulfill those objectives.
 - 14 Providing it is otherwise possible under these regulations and SWOC agrees then the winners of Somerset 2 (North & South) shall be promoted to Somerset 1 and the bottom two placed sides in that league relegated. The winners of Somerset 3 (North & South) shall be similarly promoted to Somerset 2 (North & South) and the bottom side in each of those leagues relegated. There will be no play off matches for the second placed sides in either of these leagues.
 - 15 The League Secretaries of Somerset Premier, Somerset 1, Somerset 2 (North & South) and Somerset 3 (North & South) shall be appointed from nominees submitted by SCRFU.