



RUGBY NOVA SCOTIA LEAGUE REGULATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The following regulations apply to all games of Rugby played in Nova Scotia and sanctioned or approved by Rugby Nova Scotia (RNS) involving one or more members (clubs) and registered participants (coach, athlete and officials) of RNS except where superseded by regulations issued by RNS for specific tournaments and events.
- 1.2. No club shall have two teams competing in the same division.
- 1.3. Barring any league variation laid out in this document (roster size, substitutions, game length, etc) the Game shall be played in accordance with the World Rugby Laws of the Game with any mandatory variations prescribed by Rugby Canada (RC).
- 1.4. RNS member clubs shall obtain the permission of RNS for any fixtures against out of province clubs, schools, or touring sides regardless of whether the game is played in or out of Nova Scotia. This is to be done through the online sanctioning process as outlined for the specific criteria. For exhibition games against opposition not affiliated with a provincial union, matches will not be sanctioned without Proof of Insurance.
- 1.5. Clubs wishing to hold a tournament shall apply to RNS no less than 30 days in advance of the scheduled date. RNS can deny any application submitted for various reasons. The tournament is not sanctioned until approved by Rugby Nova Scotia and Rugby Canada. An application does not guarantee sanction.



2. **SAFETY**

- 2.1. The Home/Host team shall ensure that the playing field is properly marked out. The field must have flags, poles and other devices in accordance with World Rugby
- 2.2. Law 1. All goalposts shall be protected with padding. All flagpoles shall be flexible. Should this not be done, the match official has the right to delay the game until complete.
- 2.3. Home teams shall ensure that for all games, a playing area is created by roping off the field from goal line to goal line with a minimum of five (5) meters between the rope and the touch line. A technical zone should also be included in field setup for coaches, managers, and replacements. Should this not be done, the match official has the right to not start the game.
- 2.4. The home team or hosting organization shall have an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that has been approved by its Executive and submitted to RNS.
- 2.5. Any game shall be immediately suspended if extreme weather conditions (i.e. lightning, hail) exist or threaten.
 - 2.5.1. Rugby Nova Scotia will follow the World Rugby and Rugby Canada guidelines for these weather events:

[World Rugby Lightning Guidelines](#)

[World Rugby Heat Guidelines](#)

It may only be resumed when considered safe by the referee. It should only be considered safe to return to the field of play a minimum of 30 minutes after the final flash of lightning or clap of thunder has been seen/heard.

If it is not possible to resume the game within one hour of the suspension, the referee may abandon the game. If the game is called before seventy-five (75) percent of the game has been completed, a make-up game will be scheduled at a later date. If more than seventy-five (75) percent has elapsed then the team ahead at that point will be declared the winners.



3. GENERAL

- 3.1. It is the responsibility of the referee to ensure games kickoff as scheduled. Any delay to kickoff for the grounds of fairness or player welfare are at the discretion of the referee.
- 3.2. All league games must comply with their specific league regulations outlined in Appendices A, B & C. Additional players must be agreed upon by captains, and the Technical Director of RNS must be informed via email of the addition at least 24 hours prior to kickoff.
- 3.3. When two teams have jerseys of similar colour, the home team shall wear a set of contrasting colour.
- 3.4. Teams shall abide by dates, venues and kick off times set out in the schedule. In the event that a game change is requested, the teams must agree upon a new date and/or time, and communicate that in writing to the Rugby NS Technical Director no later than 48 hours in advance of the originally scheduled time.
 - 3.4.1. It is the responsibility of the teams involved in the Game Change Request to confirm field availability, and communicate this to Rugby Nova Scotia. Once this is confirmed, the Rugby Nova Scotia Technical Director will confirm referee availability for the change.
 - 3.4.2. Game changes may be refused if a field and/or referee is unavailable.
- 3.5. Prior to kickoff each team must complete the Team Sheet on Play HQ. The Team Sheet must list all players available for the game, including replacements to be used according to Law 3. All players listed must be registered with RNS as a participant of that club, or have been agreed upon as guest players by both teams.
 - 3.5.1. Referees will not begin the game without a Team Sheet completed.
 - 3.5.2. If a club plays an ineligible player, that club will be considered in default of that match. Player eligibility is addressed in Section 5 and in individual league policies.



- 3.5.2.1. This infraction counts towards any sanctioned Rugby Nova Scotia event including but not limited to league games, exhibition games etc. If Play HQ is not usable for an exhibition game, a digital record of players is acceptable.
- 3.6. Any infraction of 3.1-3.5 may be considered grounds for administrative sanction of the offending team or teams.
- 3.7. A team shall be considered in default of a game if the team, without extenuating circumstances or without having reached agreement with the other team to reschedule the game, fails to present itself ready to play at the scheduled venue prior to kickoff.
- 3.8. For the purpose of calculating league standings, four (4) league points will be deducted from the team that defaulted. The team, which did not default, shall be awarded league points as though the game had been played and won as per the League Reference Table. A score of 0 to 30 against the team, which defaulted, shall be recorded for the purpose of future determination of standings.
- 3.9. The referee shall submit the result on Play HQ within 24 hours of the completion of the game. This means the number of tries, conversions and penalty goals which make up the total score.
- 3.10. Exhibition games are understood to be played under the spirit of friendly competition and development. Rules in effect are the age-appropriate World Rugby Laws of the game, but any laws not directly related to safety are subject to change by mutual agreement. This includes roster size, substitutions, playing field size, playing time, etc. These variations should be communicated by organizers of exhibition games, and communicated to referees in advance of the game.
- 3.11. Red cards issued during exhibition games shall be subject to the Rugby Nova Scotia Discipline Policy and will be addressed in the same manner as those occurring in league competition.
- 3.12. All Rugby Nova Scotia sanctioned leagues, games and events are subject to the Rugby Nova Scotia On-Field Discipline Policy.



4. PROTESTS AND DEFAULTS

- 4.1. Where a Club claims that an opposing team is in default or wishes to protest the result of a game for some other reason, the Club shall submit to the RNS office, with simultaneous copy to the opposing Club, a written explanation of the circumstances including all pertinent information. The representative of the team claiming default shall inform the referee and the opposing team representative at that time the alleged default took place (where possible the game shall be played). To be valid the submission shall be emailed within three (3) days of the scheduled date of the game.
- 4.2. Upon notice of an allegation, the defending Club shall submit to the RNS office a written explanation of the circumstances including all pertinent details. This submission, to be valid, shall be sent by email within seven (7) days of the scheduled game.
- 4.3. Immediately upon receipt of the submission from both Clubs, the Technical Director shall consider the allegations, collect such additional evidence as is considered necessary, review with the Competitions Committee, if the allegations are found to be true, assess such sanctions as are deemed appropriate.
- 4.4. Where a team defaults a game, its Club shall be liable for all reasonable costs incurred by the non-offending team and the referee. The following shall apply:
 - i. Four (4) league points will be deducted from total league points,
 - ii. \$300 financial penalty payable to RNS upon receipt of invoice
 - iii. Loss of home game/club day (if impacted) for following season
- 4.4.1. Where a team defaults 30% or more regular season league games, they shall be required to complete a non-league rebuilding season of exhibition matches, with support from RNS prior to re-entry to a league.
- 4.4.2. A team defaulting a game may be barred from further competition until its obligations and penalties have been fulfilled.
- 4.5. In the event that time or other circumstances do not allow the procedures outlined in 4.1-4.5 to be followed, then the Technical Director shall take such steps as they deem necessary to resolve the dispute in the time available.
- 4.6. All decisions will be emailed to the Clubs and players involved.



- 4.7. Provided that both Clubs involved have had the opportunity to present information as noted above, the decision of the Chair of Competition Committee will be final except as specified under the Appeals Policy.

5. GENERAL ELIGIBILITY

- 5.1. All players, coaches and match officials, must be registered as members on Play HQ, prior to training and/or competition.
- 5.1.1. All Rugby Nova Scotia sanction competition must follow the three (3) year age-banding guidelines. Please refer to **Appendix B.**
- 5.1.2. Players who are in the youngest year of a three year age-band must complete a playing-up form and submit to Rugby NS for approval. Submissions made less than 48 hours before competition are not guaranteed to be reviewed in time.
- 5.1.3. Particular guidelines are set for Front Row Players. All Front Row Players in the middle year of three year age-banding will require exemptions forms. Players born in the youngest year of three year age-banding who are playing Front Row will not be granted exemptions to play Front Row.
- 5.2. A member of a Club in RNS may not join another Club without completing the Play HQ player transfer **completely** (thereby getting the approval of both clubs and RNS).
- 5.3. A player cannot be a playing member of two clubs at the same time, without being a registered Dual Member, or completing the guest player process (seeking permission from the opposing club, notifying RNS, and noting the guest player on the game sheet) each time they wish to play for another club.
- 5.4. If a player plays for another club without first meeting the requirements of 5.2 & 5.3, as appropriate, they are liable to suspension and the Club for which they play shall be considered to be in default for all games in which they played.
- 5.5. In order to be eligible for playoff participation a player must be a registered member one (1) month before the playoffs begin for that league/division. Exceptional circumstances may be submitted (complete with justifications) to the Technical Director for review by competitions committee approval and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.



6. DETERMINATION OF STANDINGS

- 6.1. The winner of each league game shall be awarded four (4) league points and the loser shall be awarded zero (0) league points. Each team in a game, which was tied, shall be awarded two (2) league points. Bonus points (1) will be awarded based on specific league policies.
- 6.2. Any team in default of a league game shall have four (4) league points deducted from their league total and forfeit a portion of their bond.
- 6.3. Teams in any division shall be ranked so that the team with the most league points is first and so on in descending order.
- 6.4. In the case of two teams having the same number of league points, that team which first satisfies one of the following criteria applied in the given order shall be ranked the higher of the two teams:
 - i. The team with the greater number of league points in league games between the two;
 - ii. The team with the greater points differential (points scored less points against; maximum attributable differential 30 points per game) in league games between the two teams.
 - iii. The team with the greater number of wins in league games;
 - iv. The team with the greater overall points differential based on league games played (maximum attributable differential 30 points per game).
 - v. Coin toss.
- 6.5. In the case of a tie between more than two teams, the following criteria shall be applied in the order given until the tie is resolved:
 - i. The team with the greater number of league points in league games between the tied teams. (If after the application of (i) there should remain a tie between only two (2) teams, then that tie shall be resolved by the method for breaking ties between the two teams.);
 - ii. The team with the greater overall points differential (points scored less points against; maximum attributable differential 30 points per game) based on league games played.
 - iii. If after the application of (ii) there should remain a tie between only two teams, then that tie shall be resolved by coin toss.

7. PLAYOFFS

- 7.1. Playoff format will be confirmed before the commencement of league fixtures.



- 7.2. Each playoff game shall be played at the home field of the team, which placed higher in the final league standings. If the game cannot be played at that field, then the game shall be played at a reasonably located field chosen by the team, which would have had the home field.
- 7.3. Where two teams from the same club are scheduled to compete in playoff matches on the same day at separate locations, and the travel time between venues exceeds three (3) hours, the lower division playoff match shall be rescheduled. Rescheduling may include adjusting kickoff times or moving the match to the following day to allow the club to meet both obligations.
- 7.4. If at the end of a playoff game the score should be tied, then two ten (10) minute periods of overtime shall be played. If at the end of this overtime the score should still be tied, then the teams shall play one ten (10) minute period of sudden death overtime (the team which scores first is the winner). If after sudden death it is still a tie, we will have a kicking competition. Whoever wins that, wins the match.

7.4.1. Kicking Competition Rules

- i. A coin toss decides who kicks first.
- ii. Only players who were on the pitch at the conclusion of the match can kick.
- iii. Five (5) players from each Team will take place kicks from three different areas, all on the 22 metre line, as follows: Position 1: directly in front of the posts; Position 2: on the 15 metre line on the left-hand side of the posts (determined as facing the posts); Position 3: on the 15 metre line on the right-hand side of the posts (determined as facing the posts)
- iv. The referee will start the competition by calling the first player selected from the Team kicking first to the first kicking position. Once the player has taken the kick, the referee calls a player from the opposing Team to kick from the same position.
- v. If there is an equal number of successful kicks once each team has completed its five kicks, the competition continues on a “sudden death” basis, following the same order of kickers used in the first five kicks.



- vi. Should a player be injured during the kicking competition, they can be replaced – but only by one of the remaining players who was on the field when sudden death in extra time concluded.

8. DISCIPLINE

- 8.1. Referee reports of offenses must be submitted within 24 hours post-game.
- 8.2. RNS activates the Discipline Committee upon receiving a report. The Chair is independent and joined by two pool members, avoiding conflicts of interest.
- 8.3. Hearings occur weekly, typically Wednesday. Players with straight red cards are suspended until the hearing.
- 8.4. RNS informs both clubs about the hearing and the referee report.
- 8.5. The accused party has 24 hours to respond with either:
 - i. Acceptance of the referee's report;
 - ii. Request for a full hearing.
- 8.6. Full hearings include evidence submissions and participation of both clubs and the referee.
- 8.7. Sanctions follow World Rugby guidelines, adjusted for Nova Scotia's shorter season.
- 8.8. Appeals are allowed for new evidence or length of sanction. A \$200 bond applies for new evidence, refunded if the appeal is upheld.



Senior League Policies

	Div	BP 4 Tries	BP Loss <7	BP Forfeit	Player Restrictions	Substitutions	Roster Min.	Roster Max.
Senior Men	1	No	Yes	No	N/A	8	10	23
Senior Women	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	N/A	8	10	23
Senior Men	2	No	Yes	No	Top 8	8	10	23
Senior Women	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Top 10	8	10	23

1. ELIGIBILITY

In addition to Section 5 Eligibility

- 1.1. All players playing Senior Rugby must follow the age-banding guidelines.
- 1.2. Players who are eligible to play up must complete a Playing-Up Form and submit to Rugby NS for approval. Submissions made less than 48 hours before competition are not guaranteed to be reviewed in time. Particular guidelines are set for Front Row Players. Please refer to Appendix B.
- 1.3. Players who are members of Clubs with teams in multiple Senior Divisions who are not eligible to play in a lower division will be classified as the Top 8 (men) and Top 10 (women).
- 1.4. A club with teams in multiple Senior Divisions shall maintain their list of 8/10 best players available each week, beginning with the first week of Senior Division 2 games. Top 8/10 will be recorded on a shared document provided by RNS that is accessible by all teams.
- 1.5. Players listed to the Top 8/10 must be uninjured and within Nova Scotia to be eligible. In instances where a Top 8/10 player becomes unavailable due to injury or other circumstances for 2 or more games, they must be removed from the Top 8/10 list, and replaced.



- 1.6. Players who are suspended are ineligible to be listed on the Top 8/10.
Updates to the Top 8/10 lists shall be submitted through the shared document provided by RNS each Wednesday by 9pm for monitoring. In an instance where a player is not eligible to be on the Top 8/10 list, RNS will communicate to the affected Club within 24 hours.
- 1.7. Any club who lists Top 8/10 players on a roster in the lower Senior Division shall be considered in breach of policy and the game will be considered a default.
- 1.8. If a club plays an ineligible player, that club will be considered in default of that match. Player eligibility is addressed in section 7 and in individual league policies.

2. **PLAYOFFS**

- 2.1. Playoff format will be confirmed before the commencement of league fixtures.



University League Policies

	Div	BP 4 Tries	BP Loss <7	Substitutions	Roster Min.	Roster Max.
Men's	1 & 2	No	No	8	10	23
Women's Club	1	Yes	Yes	8	10	23

1. ELIGIBILITY

In addition to Section 5 Eligibility

- 1.1. University Clubs participating in these leagues are responsible for establishing and enforcing their own player eligibility requirements. These requirements must align with the institution's insurance policies and their ability to verify student enrollment status. All eligibility requirements must be submitted to Rugby Nova Scotia prior to the start of the season.
- 1.2. Additional eligibility requirements from Rugby Nova Scotia for participation in the University league are as follows:
 - 1.2.1. First Division: All players must be full-time students at the university they are representing.
 - 1.2.2. Second Division: All players must be full-time students at a recognized post-secondary institution.
 - 1.2.3. Women's Club: All players must be full-time students at the university they are representing.

2. PLAYOFFS

- 2.1. Playoff format will be confirmed before the commencement of league fixtures.



U17 League Policies

	Div	BP 4 Tries	BP Loss <7	BP Forfeit	Player Restrictions	Substitutions	Roster Min.	Roster Max.
U17	1	Yes	Yes	No	N/A	Unlimited and Rolling	10	N/A

1. ELIGIBILITY

In addition to Section 5 Eligibility

- 1.1. All individuals playing within this league must follow the age-banding guidelines, and be an eligible participant of U17.

2. GAME VARIATIONS

- 2.1. This league follows the [Rugby Canada Under 19 Game Variations](#).
- 2.2. A mercy rule will be applied when the score differential exceeds 50 points. At that point, the score will be recorded as final, and the remainder of the game continues without further scoring being tracked.

3. PLAYOFFS

- 3.1. Playoff format will be confirmed before the commencement of league fixtures.

Youth Tournament Policies

Age	Field Size	# of players	Contact / Flag	Birth Years	Playing Up	Playing Down	Score/Standings Kept
U10	Half Field	6	Flag	2017 2016	Permitted with form	Not permitted	No
U12	Half Field	6	Flag	2015 2014	Permitted with form	Not permitted	No
U14	Half Field	7	Contact	2013 2012	Permitted with form	Not permitted	No
U16	Half Field	7	Contact	2011 2010	Permitted with form	Not permitted	Scores No Standings
U18	Full Field	7	Contact	2009 2008	Permitted with form	Not permitted	Scores + Standings

1. ELIGIBILITY

In addition to Section 5 Eligibility

- 1.1. Players must have valid and active Rugby Canada Insurance to participate in youth competition. Contact insurance supersedes non-contact insurance. Non-contact insurance is only valid for non-contact participation.
- 1.2. All Rugby Nova Scotia sanction competition must follow the three (3) year age-banding guidelines. Please refer to Appendix B.
- 1.3. Players should be registered in the age division most applicable to their age, not where they are playing.
- 1.4. Players may play for other clubs at Youth tournaments provided they are properly insured. However, unless noted on the roster before the start of the tournament, borrowing players from another club in competitive divisions will result in the game being defaulted by the team that borrowed players.
- 1.5. Refer to attached chart to determine eligibility for playing up. In RNS-run events no overage players are allowed, to allow underage players to play up. In individually sanctioned games or tournaments teams may agree to their own rules provided only three birth years feature on the roster for any one game.
- 1.6. Red cards must be reported to the tournament director for U18 divisions. For anything younger, U18 red cards may be given to remove a player from the game



for safety concerns, and the tournament director reserves the right to bar a player playing in an unsafe manner from returning.

- 1.7. Any Club with any doubt concerning the eligibility of a player should contact the office of Rugby NS.

2. DETERMINATION OF STANDINGS

- 2.1. Standings shall only be recorded and tracked for the U18 Boys and Girls divisions. Tournament formats may need to be changed from tournament to tournament based on the number of teams entered.
- 2.2. Points will be awarded in the following manner: 5 pts for a tournament win, 3 pts for second place, 1 pt for third place. If two teams combine to make one team and the contribution of players from the smaller team is at least 40%, clubs will split any season points accrued.
- 2.3. In the case of two teams having the same number of points in a single tournament, that team which first satisfies one of the following criteria applied in the given order shall be ranked the higher of the two teams:
 - 2.3.1. The team with more wins in games between the two.
 - 2.3.2. The team with the greater points differential (maximum attributable differential 20 points per game) in games between the two
 - 2.3.3. Coin toss.
- 2.4. In the case of a tie between more than two teams, the following criteria shall be applied in the order given until the tie is resolved:
 - 2.4.1. The team with the greater number of wins in games between the tied teams. (If after the application of (i) there should remain a tie between only two (2) teams, then that tie shall be resolved by the method for breaking ties between the two teams.);
 - 2.4.2. The team with the greater overall points differential (points scored less points against; maximum attributable differential 20 points per game) based on games played. If after the application of (ii) there should remain a tie between only two teams, then that tie shall be resolved by the method for breaking ties between two teams.
 - 2.4.3. Coin toss
- 2.5. In case of a tie to determine the series champion the following criteria shall be applied in the order given until the tie is resolved. (ties will not be resolved for anything other than first place)
 - (i) greater number of wins in games between tied teams
 - (ii) greater number of tries scored in games between tied teams
 - (iii) Coin Toss



Appendix A: League Dates

 Proposed League Dates 2026

League	EOI Date	Final Reg. Date	League Meeting Date	Schedule Release	Regular Season Start Date	Regular Season End Date	Playoff Start Date	Playoff Final Date
U17 Women's Fall XV	May 31st	July 15th	July 31st	Aug 7th	Sept 7th	Oct 18th	Oct 25th	Nov 1st
Summer Men's Division 1	Feb 1st	March 15th	April 15th	May 4th	May 23rd	Aug 15th	Aug 29th	Sept 12th *Excluding Maritime Final*
Summer Men's Division 2	Feb 1st	March 15th	April 15th	May 4th	May 23rd	Aug 8th	Aug 15th	Sept 12th *Excluding Maritime Final*
Summer Women's Division 1	Feb 1st	March 15th	April 15th	May 4th	June 6th	July 25th	Aug 9th	Aug 1st
Summer Women's Division 2	Feb 1st	April 1st	April 15th	May 4th	June 13th	July 25th	Aug 9th	Aug 9th
University Men Division 1	April 30th	May 31st	June 15th	July 6th	Sept 13th	Oct 24th	Oct 31st	Nov 7th
University Men Division 2	April 30th	May 31st	June 15th	July 6th	Sept 13th	Oct 24th	Oct 31st	Nov 7th

Appendix B: Age Banding Guidelines

	U19	U18	U17	U16	U15	U14	U13	U12	U11	U10	U9	U8
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Senior												
U18												
U17												
U16												
U14*												
U12*												
U10*												