

MIDLANDS RESERVE TEAM LEAGUES RULES 2023/2024 SEASON

Rule 1. All games to be played in accordance with the Laws of the game as laid down by the Rugby Football Union (RFU).

Rule 2. All clubs to use Society Referees (wherever possible) if no referee available see rule 21.

Rule 3. A player changing clubs may represent his new club immediately.

Rule 4. A maximum of 5 (Five) NOMINATED replacements will be allowed in any match. At least one front row replacement should be available either on the bench or field of play at the start of the game, to ensure that the game does not immediately go to uncontested scrums at the first injury to a front row. Rolling substitutes are allowed with 8 changes in total within the game. If both clubs agree, before the away team travels, that they wish to have more than 5 subs, then that will be permitted as long as the League Secretary is informed beforehand. This HAS to be agreed before the away team travel and with the agreement of the League Secretary.

Rule 5. The League Structure will be a vertical one with League 1 and League 2, sitting above the Merit Leagues of Staffordshire, Greater Birmingham, Worcestershire/Herefordshire, Warwickshire ,Leicestershire and East Midlands

Rule 6. A trophy in the form of a Winners Plate will be presented annually to each League winner. The winner will be promoted to the League above after consultation with the Committee.

Rule 7. Four points will be awarded for a home win. Six points for an away win.

Rule 8. Two points for a HOME draw and Three points for an AWAY draw.

Rule 9. One point will be awarded for a home defeat. Two points awarded for an away defeat.

Rule 9a. Where a game is postponed by either club it is up to those clubs concerned to reorganise the fixture at the next available date adhering to rule 15 protocol. The game will be entered on GMS as postponed and will remain so until the fixture is fulfilled and the result confirmed to the League Secretary by both clubs.

Rule 10. Uncontested Scrums :

Before a game commences, if there is a shortage of front row forwards, the game will start with uncontested scrums. Should the team who are unable to field a front row or fail to provide a front row replacement win the match they will receive **2 points maximum if they are the home team and 3 points maximum if they are the away team.**

If a game goes into uncontested scrums after the start and a front row replacement has been used points will be awarded as per normal ie rules 7,8 and 9.

ALL GAMES INVOLVING UNCONTESTED SCRUMS MUST BE REPORTED TO THE LEAGUE SECRETARY. NOT HAVING A FULL FRONT ROW IS NOT A VALID REASON FOR CANCELLING A FIXTURE.

THE MAN OFF RULE WILL APPLY TO ALL SITUATIONS INVOLVING UNCONTESTED SCRUMS AS PER RFU REGULATIONS.

Rule 11. All fixtures will be arranged and supplied to the clubs by the League Committee. All games postponed due to the grounds being unfit will be rearranged. The affected Clubs will identify the date of the rearranged fixture which will normally be the first available free Saturday after the postponement. In the event of a League game being brought forward, once the two fixture secretaries and League Secretary have agreed the date, this then becomes a binding contract and any failure to play the game by either side will result in the offending team conceding the match then Rule 15a and or Rule 15b will be enforced.

Rule 12 a. **BOTH** sides will be responsible for sending in the results. Scores must be checked with the referee.

b. Match results must be supplied to the league secretary by 8.00pm on the day of the match (normally, Saturday). This can be done by telephone, text, or e mail. (Please note that the preferred method of notification is decided by the League Secretary who will advise clubs prior to the start of the season). Failure to do so, by either side, will result in a warning for the first offence. Further offences may result in points deduction and expulsion from the League.

Rule 13. All teams should select from their normal pool of players. Basically, no ringers !! It is accepted that players returning from injury or lay off will start in a lower team. The senior fixture in a club's fixture list must always be played as a priority, unless the senior match is not played for some valid reason. The senior game should be honoured at the expense of a lower team's fixture. Failure to do this will result in the opposition being awarded the winning points and the offending club will receive NO points .

Rule 14. All games will start with a minimum of **NINE (9)** players per side. There will be no more than one player advantage to any team at the start of the game with any extra players then added to the replacements and can be used as normal. Whilst it is the committee's aim to encourage teams 'lending' players to the opposition to satisfy numbers and to play the game, both Team Managers / Captains must agree the player exchange before the game begins.

Rule 15. Where a Team cannot fulfil a fixture on the scheduled date, they must communicate this with the opposition, and the League Secretary as soon as possible. The next free week for both Sides is the default date to re-schedule the fixture to.

Rule 15a. Any side unable to fulfil a fixture for any reason other than the weather forfeits the game, except for exceptional circumstances, and agreed by the committee. Exceptional requests must be submitted to the League Secretary at least one calendar month in advance.

Failure to honour a fixture will result in the offending club losing 1 point for a home fixture and 2 points for an away fixture.

Rule 15b. Where a Club does not fulfil its **AWAY** fixture in the first part of the season, then it must forego its **HOME** fixture and travel to play the opposition **AWAY** for the return game.

Rule 16. During the course of the season, the position in the League will be based on League points awarded and the points difference. At the end of the season, in the event of a tie between teams involved in either promotion or relegation, points difference may not be the final criterion. Issues such as un-played games, forfeited games, and other factors will be taken into consideration. The results and consequent points differences in the fixtures between the two teams concerned will be taken into account. The League Committee's decision will be final.

Rule 17. Any game abandoned is to be referred to the League Secretary. The time, score and reason for the abandonment is to be notified and the matter will then be referred to the League Committee. The Committee's decision will be final subject to appeal.

Rule 18. The home team will change strip in the event of a colour clash.

Rule 19. Any team conceding THREE games in the course of the season will have their place in the League reviewed by the committee with the probable sanction of being expelled from the League and all records expunged. Any team expelled from the League for failing to fulfil fixtures will not be automatically re-admitted the following season.

If any team is expelled from the League, then any lower team from the same Club will also be expelled from their League.

In the event of a side being expelled from the League reapplying for admission the following season, at the discretion of the Committee they may be reintroduced, if their application is successful, into a League lower than the one from which they were expelled.

Rule 20. The Committee will decide on any dispute and its decision will be final subject to appeal. In the event of an appeal, that appeal may be considered by the Committee and two members of the Midlands Regional Organising Committee, who will issue a final ruling on the matter under appeal.

Rule 21. In the event of no referee being allocated to a Midlands Reserve Team League game the following should apply;

1. If either club has an 'in-house' referee who is qualified and willing to officiate then as long as both clubs agree **BEFORE** kick-off then use them and the result will stand.
2. If no qualified referee is available then the game can be played as a friendly with any of the players etc officiating and then the game is re arranged.
3. Both clubs agree to rearrange the fixture.
4. For any of these situations the relevant League Secretary **MUST** be informed before kick-off.

NOTES:

1. All results and tables will be posted on the RFU Website shown under the Midlands Reserve Leagues and all clubs are encouraged to visit this site regularly. Please take copies for publication on club notice boards and for submission to the local media. Remember that publicity creates interest for all of us.

Link to Division 1: [MRTL Division 1](#)

Link to Division 2: [MRTL Division 2](#)

2. Any club, team or interested party with concerns or questions should address them to the League Secretary as soon as possible.
3. Whilst it is not our intention to be too regulatory in respect of the Reserve Leagues, it is important that we uphold the rules strictly in order that the Leagues run smoothly and with the minimum instances of controversy.
4. It is essential that results are received on time. This is where zero tolerance will be shown. Results must be notified following the instructions given by the relevant League Secretary.

The Midlands Reserve Team League Committee

Mike Dempsey-Mitchell *Division 1 League Secretary*

Alan Danks *Division 2 League Secretary*

Bill Worth *Committee Member*

John Atkin *Committee Member*

July 2023