



Competition Description

1. The Competition shall be called the “The Army Rugby Union (ARU) Premiership Competition”, hereafter referred to as the ARU Prem. Participation in the ARU Prem will be for Regimental, Battalion, or Unit sides, in accordance with ASCB rules for team sports. Teams will be invited to play or will earn the right to play by qualification through other ARU competitions. The aim of the ARU Prem is to promote a higher level of rugby union and provide a stepping-stone for players into representational level with one of the Army Elite teams.
2. Once all teams have played each other in the regular season the eight best teams will be identified as those with the highest league points totals. The top two in each league will qualify for the quarter finals, plus the two teams with the best scores in third place. The top 4 teams will play their matches at home, against the teams seeded 5-8. These teams will be drawn from a hat to decide who they play. The quarter finals will be played with home advantage. The semi finals will be played in a neutral location geographically between the two sides. The final will be played in Aldershot.
3. Teams will remain a Prem team, unless they are relegated. This will ensure that teams are not disadvantaged by deployment on operations. The maximum number of teams being accorded ‘Prem’ status is at the discretion of the ARU Council. All matches in the ARU Prem shall be played under the IRB Laws of the game of Rugby Union and shall comply with the Rules and Regulations of the ARU.
4. There will be two premierships meetings each season at which all teams must send a representative. Held in July and Jan they will allow for a smooth running of the competition and act as an opportunity to consider queries and concerns of units. The July meeting will include the league draw.
5. Team secretaries will ensure that all the necessary details are published on the ARU Prem web page. These details will include, contact details for rugby officers, team captains and coaches, pitch locations, strip colours, changing locations and full military and civilian e-mail addresses.
6. The Championship will comprise of three leagues of five teams of equal standing. All teams will play each other once in the regular season to establish league position. Four points will be awarded for a win, two for a draw and one for a loss. Bonus points will also be awarded for either losing by seven points or less, one point, for a team scoring four or more tries in a match, one point. At the end of the round robin stages if table points are equal, position shall be determined by:
 - a. The greater difference in the aggregate number of points scored for and against.
 - b. The greater aggregate number of points scored for.
 - c. The team that has won the greater number of matches.

- d. The winner of the match between the tied teams.

6.a. During the knock out stages of the competition a result is needed for each match as there is no opportunity to re-play fixtures. After regular time there will be a 5 min gap. Teams will swap ends. Teams will play a further 2 x 10 mins each way, swapping ends at half time. The team with the highest score at the end of 20 mins will be the winner. The complete 20 mins will be played. If the scores remain tied, there will be a further gap of 5 mins as teams swap ends again. Teams will now play a 10 min sudden death period. If either team score in any way, they will be declared the winners. If after this 10 mins a winner is not found there will be a drop kick penalty shoot out. Teams will nominate 5 kickers, who must have been playing in the last session. They will all attempt a drop kick at goal from anywhere behind the 22m line. The team with the most successful kicks wins. If the scores remain equal, extra kickers will be drafted in, one at a time until a winner is found. Only those on the pitch for the last 10 mins may kick at goal.

Definitions

7. For the purposes of these Regulations only:

- a. Player means a Player who is on the established posted strength of the unit. (Or a Unit which the ASCB has authorized as an amalgamation of units for all sports AC 61021 Definition of a Unit para 2.1 refers).
- b. Appeals Panel means a panel appointed by the Management Board of the ARU, which is independent of and does not comprise any member of the Army Premiership Committee.
- c. Committee means the Army Competitions Sub Committee of the ARU.
- d. Competition means the Army Rugby Union Premiership Competition to which these regulations apply.
- e. League means all those leagues forming part of the Competition, which are of equal standing.
- f. Handbook means handbook published by the ARU on the ARU web-site.
- g. Next available Wednesday means the first available Wednesday (which may include a Wednesday prior to that upon which a further match in the Competition was originally scheduled to be played) upon which both units are able to play.
- h. Non-available Wednesday's means Wednesdays that have been allocated priority to Corps / Army within the structured season; agreed and endorsed by the ARU Council.
- i. ARU means Army Rugby Union.
- j. Premiership Status means units that have been selected and/or gained promotion to the competition and therefore have the right to participate in the competition.

Organising Committee

8. The Competition shall be organised under the direction of the Director of Rugby and administered on a day to day basis by the Chairman ARU Prem, Maj James Cook RA. jamescook148@hotmail.com or JCook.jscsc@defenceacademy.mod.uk or 07949-574155.

9. The Chairman shall have power to make administration instructions for the management of the leagues for which they are responsible for provided that any such instructions are not in conflict with these Regulations.
10. The chairman shall have the power to make further regulations or to amend these Regulations; subject to endorsement by Director Rugby in writing prior to their introduction.
11. Amended regulations must clearly state the extent to which these Regulations are amended or where applicable deleted.
12. Amended regulations must be published in writing to the units prior to any such unit playing its first match in the Competition. (Except where all participating units within the premiership agree to the amendment).

Eligibility

13. Units:
 - a. The Competition is open to Units affiliated to the ARU, who have achieved Premiership Status or been granted Premiership Status.
 - b. Units must agree to be bound by the RFU disciplinary procedures and that its players recognise and agree to be bound by the RFU disciplinary procedures.
 - c. Where there has been an amalgamation of a unit and having obtained consent of the Committee (which it may in its absolute discretion withhold) in which case that unit will be entitled to retain the Prem Status of its antecedence unit.
 - d. The Committee shall have the power at any time prior to or during the season to impose conditions upon the membership or continued participation of any Unit in the Competition. Any Unit failing to comply with such conditions shall not be entitled to enter the Competition or to continue to participate in it.
14. Players:
 - a. A Unit in the competition may only play or select as a replacement, players who are on the unit establishment of that unit and occupy a JPA position ID. Players can not be posted to units on JPA unless there is a MCM assignment order. There is to be a clear 7 (seven) days gap between a player arriving in a unit and being eligible to play. Players attached to a unit on War Establishment for operations are NOT eligible to play for the new unit, but may continue playing for their old unit.
 - b. No player may play in the front row of the scrum during contested scrummages until he has reached his eighteenth birthday.
 - c. Any player that has been suspended from playing civilian rugby; and is currently banned or not allowed to play civilian rugby should not participate in the competition; failure to comply with this regulation will result in forfeiture of the match.
 - d. In all matches in the competition 7 replacements from a total of 7 are permitted in accordance with Law 3 of the IRB Regulations; specifically law 3.5.

- e. In the interests of safety each team playing in the competition must have sufficient front row players, aged at least eighteen years, to play at hooker, tight head prop and loose head prop. They must be suitably trained and experienced to ensure that on the first and second occasions (whether due to injury or consequent to a player(s) being temporarily suspended or ordered off) that a replacement in any front row position is required the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums. If on the third occasion a front row player requires to be replaced and his team cannot provide a suitably trained and experienced player, aged at least eighteen years, to play in the front row of the scrum, the referee, having made enquiry of and having confirmed this fact with the captain of the team or such other person nominated by the Unit as the manager or other person responsible for the team, will order uncontested scrums. The player will leave the field, and NOT be replaced. The team will continue with 14 players. The result of the match will stand. In other words, teams need two front row replacements at the beginning of the match.
- f. Where a player(s) is/are temporarily suspended from the field of play, which creates a second or subsequent occasion in the competition that a front row forward requires to be replaced, and his team cannot provide a replacement or suitably trained and experienced player, aged at least eighteen years, to enable the match to safely continue with contested scrums. The referee, having made enquiry of and confirmed this fact with the team captain (or other person nominated by the Unit as manager or other person responsible for the team) the match shall continue but for the duration (and only for the duration) of the temporary suspension with non-contested scrums and the match result will be unaffected.
- g. If a player is posted from one premiership team to another during the competition season they will be ineligible to play for the new team but may continue to play for their former team if practical. Any queries should be addressed to the Sec Prem as soon as possible.
- h. Units that have players sent on ERE after Sep 1 each year may continue to play that individual as long as the ERE unit is not in the ARU Prem.
- i. Units may lodge an inquiry with the ARU, via Sec ARU Prem for an individual to play for their unit that has no opportunity to play for their present unit. For instance, individuals working in the MOD that have just come from RD, may apply to play for their Bn / unit. This will be considered on a case by case basis, but is aimed at players who are keen to play, but are posted away from the Field Army. All applications for attachment to play for a unit last a single season. No further applications can be made once the knocks out stages begin. Units can call upon two attached players each season, no more. Players can only be bid for during the league stage of the competition. All attachments end at the end of the season.
- j. Units that have an individual attached to them on Ex LONG LOOK, may play that individual in their Prem team. This must be clarified with the Sec ARU Prem before hand.

Promotion / Relegation

15. The ARU Prem committee reserve the right to deem a unit NOT UP TO STANDARD for the ARU Prem. If a team continually loses fixtures by a margin of more than 20 points, for more than two seasons, that team will be invited to withdraw from the competition. This motion must be supported by a majority vote by Prem Rugby Officers.

Fixtures

16. The dates for matches will be circulated by the ARU in June each year. Matches are to be played on the prescribed Wednesday with a KO of 1400 hrs. If arrangements are made before 1 Sep 08, evening KOs may be agreed, as well as playing on a Tuesdays, Thursday and Fridays. Mondays are not available.

17. All fixtures will be agreed upon by Fri 25 July. After this date any team unable to make a fixture will lose the match regardless of the reason why. A match cancelled more than 7 days before KO will be recorded as a 10 – 0 win for the non forfeiting side. No bonus points will be awarded. Teams that cancel a fixture within 7 days of KO will lose the match 20 – 0. No bonus points will be awarded. If a fixture can not be played due to non availability of both sides, and this has been agreed and staffed by the Sec ARU, then the match will be recorded as a 10 – 10 draw, with both teams will be awarded 2 points, and 10 points for and against.

18. The league make up will be drawn at the July planning meeting in the presence of all units. There will be a degree of pre-selection in order to split the previous years finalists, and prevent a single league containing all Infantry sides.

19. When cancelling or changing any fixture the timeline is in relation to when the Sec Prem is first informed. It is then up to the Sec Prem to inform other agencies.

Un-played, Postponed, and Abandoned Matches

20. If a match is abandoned within 60 minutes of playing time due to adverse weather conditions or due to injury that prevents the match continuing, the match shall be rescheduled under the same arrangements on a date agreed by the relevant Units, and the Secretary ARU Prem. If the match is abandoned after 60 minutes play then the score at the time of abandonment shall be deemed the final score. The decision as to the time elapsed and the necessity to abandon shall be that of the Referee alone.

21. In the event of an abandoned match, the secretary of the home team shall provide to the chairman ARU Prem an e-mail containing, the time of abandonment, the existing score, and the reason for abandonment.

21 (a). In the event of unplayable pitches due to snow, frost or other unplayable ground conditions the Chairman reserves the right to adopt a Pools Prediction format to resolve un-played fixtures. In the first instance, every opportunity must be given to get the matches played. However, if fixture congestion prevents this, the Chairman will seek guidance from the Director ARU Community. Matches whose results seems obvious will be awarded a 10 – 0 win without bonus point. Matches that are too close to call will be awarded a 10 – 10 draw without bonus point. At the later stages of the competition teams that are separated by at least one side will be deemed predictable, those adjacent will be predicted as draws. However, the Chairman can seek further clarification, especially if results in prior matches are very close.

Completion of Match Result Card

22. The home unit shall no longer be required to complete a match result card.

23. Providing false information on players or replacements taking part in a match shall be taken as a serious offence. The Penalty is that the Unit shall be deducted not less than two championship points on each occasion false information has been provided. This will be in addition to any points that may have been deducted if the players or replacements were ineligible.

Kick Off & Delayed Arrivals

24. All matches will kick-off at 1400hrs. Any variation to kick-off (e.g. for a floodlit match) should be mutually agreed at least ten (10) days in advance of the match in which case the Chairman ARU Prem and Secretary ARURS Senior appointments must also be informed. A different KO time is only sanctioned if both units agree to it. However, units may arrange for an evening KO if it is made known to the opponents 4 weeks prior to the fixture, in which case the opposition can not refuse.

25. If a team arrives late for a match, for any reason, they can demand a delay to KO by 30 mins without negotiation, as long as they inform the referee immediately upon arrival. If this is still not enough time to prepare, then any further extension is to be negotiated between both captains and the referee.

Need for a Result

25.a. In the knock out stages of the competition there is a need to gain a result on the day, a draw will not do. In this instance the following provisions are made. After regular time there will be a 5min gap. Teams will swap ends. Teams will play a further 2 x 10 mins each way, swapping ends at half time. The team with the highest score at the end of 20mins will be the winner. The complete 20mins will be played. If the scores remain tied, there will be a further gap of 5 mins as teams swap ends again. Teams will now play a 10 min sudden death period. If either team score in any way, they will be declared the winners. If after this 10mins a winner is not found there will be a drop kick penalty shoot out. Teams will nominate 5 kickers, who must have been playing in the last session. They will all attempt a drop kick at goal from anywhere behind the 22m line. The team with the most successful kicks wins. If the scores remain equal, extra kickers will be drafted in, one at a time until a winner is found. Only those on the pitch for the last 10 mins may kick at goal.

Reporting Of Results

26. The Secretary of the home team is to report the match result to the Chairman ARU Prem by mobile phone text (07949-574155) or military e-mail within 24hrs. The home team of each match is responsible for updating the ARU web page with a match report, including photographs, within five days of the match being played. The match card should be posted to the Sec ARU Prem at the following address: Maj JP Cook RA, A Div, JSCSC, ACSC, Watchfield, Wiltshire, SN6 8LA.

Referees and Touch Judges

27. The Chairman ARU Prem will liaise with the secretary ARURS to make arrangements for all matches. Secretaries of individual sides are to arrange final match details when they contact their appointed referee in the 5 days prior to the fixture. In the event of no Referee being appointed or the failure of the Referee to appear, the Senior Touch Judge shall automatically be appointed referee under these regulations. The home side shall provide a replacement touch judge if no independent official is available.

28. Touch Judges for matches appointed by ARURS will have additional powers in accordance with RFU Laws. Should ARURS Touch Judges not be available, sides are responsible for providing their own Touch Judge for the match.

Grounds and Match Management

29. The home Unit is responsible for correctly and clearly marking its pitch. In addition, it must make proper provision to ensure that (with the exception of the touch judges, the fourth official and others permitted by these Regulations) all spectators, replacements and

officials are kept at a reasonable distance from the field of play, behind permanent or temporary barrier such as stakes and rope.

30. Each Unit playing in Competition shall in addition make provision for two technical areas one for each team competing in a match (each of which areas shall not exceed 10 sq. metres and which will be at least one metre from the touchline of the pitch. The technical areas when occupied must not in any way impede the touch judges or fourth official undertaking his responsibilities). The technical areas must be clearly designated between the touchline of the pitch and any perimeter or pitch side fencing or other barrier as being that to which all those permitted within the pitch side or perimeter fencing (i.e. not more than two medical staff responsible for administering treatment to players and not more than two persons carrying water for the players) are to be restricted during the match other than the period of half time.

31. Each Unit playing in the competition must ensure that team replacements and coaching staff are not permitted onto the pitch except for half time.

32. Not more than four water carriers per team (including medical staff), are permitted within the pitch side or perimeter fencing or other barrier. Water carriers may only be permitted onto the playing area for the purposes of taking water to the players, at such times as shall be approved by the Referee (on any other occasion players must come to the touchline to get water).

33. Any player, temporarily suspended during a match must remain in the technical area or leave the playing enclosure and be clearly and readily identifiable to the fourth official.

34. Any player ordered off must leave the playing enclosure.

Disciplinary Powers

35. Players will be disciplined in the normal manner by the awarding of red and yellow cards, and any subsequent hearings. However, spectators will also be subject to discipline powers of the team of three officiating the match. The director army rugby reserves the right to penalise a team by the awarding of negative points to their league score.

36. Without prejudice to the powers of the RFU or the delegation of powers to ARU under the Rules of the RFU. The Committee shall have the power (subject to a right of appeal to the Appeals Panel) to expel or suspend any Unit, from membership of the Competition or impose such other penalty, as is considered appropriate, on any Unit for a breach of these Regulations.

37. The Committee shall have the right to delegate disciplinary powers (other than the power to expel or suspend from membership of the Competition) for any breach of these Regulations to the individual(s) given administrative control.

38. In all matches in the Competition any decision taken by the appointed match officials or their replacements shall be final and binding insofar as the Laws of the Game are concerned.

Handling of Complaints, Disputes, Breaches of Regulation and Appeals by the Committee

39. It is imperative that matters concerning promotion and regulation are handled expeditiously at the end of the season so that Units have adequate and proper time to make arrangements for the following season. Accordingly no complaint can be made more than 14 days after the end of the Season regardless as to whether the facts giving rise to the complaint were known or not. Any alleged breach of any of these Regulations by a Unit shall be notified to that Unit by or on behalf of the Committee or by the individual(s) given

administrative control within 48 hours of knowledge of the occurrence or facts giving rise to the allegation and thereafter confirmed in writing within 96 hours of knowledge of the occurrence. The Unit shall have seven days from receipt of notification to respond. The Committee or the individual(s) given administrative control shall give a ruling within a further seven days.

40. If the Unit or either the complaining Unit, or the other party to the complaint or dispute, or the Unit against whom the complaint is made, requires an oral hearing, it must be requested in writing at the time the application. The Committee shall, within five days of receiving notice of such request, appoint a time, date and place for the hearing of such complaint.

41. Points may be deducted from a unit who fails to comply with ARU Prem rules. In particular, teams that play an ineligible player during the league season will be deducted 6 (six) league points. Teams that play an ineligible player during the knock out stages will be expelled from the competition that season.

42. Spare.

Appeals to the ARU

43. Any party having an interest aggrieved at the decision of the Committee or Community Rugby Committee may, within fourteen days from the date of the letter informing it of the decision, appeal or request a review of the decision in writing to the Secretary of the ARU restating the grounds on which the original appeal or complaint was made. The Secretary of the ARU shall refer the objection to an Appeals Panel to act either as an Appeal Committee or as a review panel as it may in its absolute discretion decide. In any hearing before the Appeals Panel which will deal with the matter by way of re-hearing.

44. The appellant shall not be entitled to introduce any further grounds of objection not previously stated to the Community Rugby Committee or Committee (as appropriate) unless such grounds of objection arose out of any previous hearing in relation to the matters complained of or from the conduct of any such hearing.

45. In addition, where the appellant wishes to rely upon any evidence, which was not placed before the Organising Committee when it took the decision appealed against. It must specifically notify the Chairman of the Appeals Panel at least 48 hours ahead of the hearing who will do everything reasonably possible to give any other party to the hearing as much notice as possible. The Chairman of the Appeals Panel may upon receipt of a request to admit further evidence require any hearing to be. If further evidence is submitted, the Chairman of the Appeals Panel will decide as to what weight should be given to it.

46. An appellant shall not be entitled to lodge a second objection arising from the circumstances on which the objection is based.

47. The decision of the Appeals Panel, which shall be given within 28 days of all information, required by it being supplied shall be final and binding. It shall be at the sole discretion of the Appeals Panel as to the burden of proof that may be required, as to how the matter before it shall be dealt with and whether or not to grant a personal hearing having regard to the matter, the rules of natural justice, the Human Rights Act, the rights and arguments of the persons or Units concerned and the effect(s) and impact of any decision taken upon third parties. The Appeals Panel will determine who (if anybody) should be heard and will be entitled to seek advice from such other persons (including if it deems it appropriate members of the Committee) as it deems appropriate. In particular the Appeals Panel shall have the power to hear evidence from any third party or Unit not directly involved in the appeal if in the Appeal Panel's sole and absolute discretion it is of

the view that such third party or Unit may be materially or adversely affected by any decision it may make.

48. Upon a party to an appeal failing to provide such information within the time required, the Committee or the Appeals Panel (as the case may be) shall be entitled to refuse to hear that party when considering the appeal.

Match Day Administration

49. In the event of Units having similar or clashing colours the home Unit will be responsible for changing its colours, subject to the satisfaction of the appointed Referee.

50. The jerseys of teams competing in the competition should all be numbered in accordance with any IRB requirements to ensure the correct identification of all players and replacements during a match.

51. Regimental mascots and other such paraphernalia are encouraged by the ARU. However, their inclusion must not convey advantage to either side or unnecessarily delay proceedings. Any pre-match parade of any sort will be coordinated by the senior ARURS official, and not exceed whatever they may see fit, and in keeping with rugby unions laws.

Medical Safety

52. The home team should ensure a doctor or other medically qualified person is in attendance throughout the match and in addition there must be access to a working telephone (whether a mobile or otherwise) adjacent to the pitch. There must also be clear access for emergency vehicles. Individual units are to ensure they have conducted their own risk assessment and made provision for medical emergencies.

The Season

53. Any team that is committed to operations or extensive training may take a sabbatical season and maintain their position for the following season. No team may miss a second season; failure to take part will see them return to community rugby. Individual appeals to avoid relegation should be submitted by commanding officers direct to the Director Army Rugby.

54. Each Unit side will be encouraged to make one of their home fixtures a premier event to which VIPs from the ARU and the CoC will be invited. These invites will be coordinated by the Sec ARU Prem and coordinated with the home unit Adjutant. The day should include a pre-match meal and post match function for players. No funding is available for hosting, but the ARU remains responsible for VIPs travel overseas or long distance by air if necessary.

55. The ARU structured season is organised so as to not deny players the opportunity to play at all levels of army rugby. As such, ARU Prem matches take place before Corps fixtures each month and are equally separated from Army fixtures. Therefore, all ARU Prem sides **MUST** release their players to represent other sides whenever requested. Any team that denies players the opportunity to represent their Corps or Army sides on the basis of avoiding injury could be docked points from their league table total. The Sec Prem will entertain information about players not being released from any source; however, no points will be deducted without a formal hearing.

Incentives to Play

56. The main incentive to play is the recognition that players get and their exposure to senior ARU coaches and selectors.

57. The annual winner will be crowned Army Rugby Union Champions.

Travel

58. Units are to fund their own travel for all matches within England, Scotland, and Wales. For matches in Germany, Cyprus or Northern Ireland the ARU will subsidise travel by up to £1000 per team. Flights should be booked by units and invoices submitted to the Sec ARU for payment of the £1000. The ARU will subsidise coach or minibus travel on a case by case basis, however this remains the responsibility of the home and away teams respectively. A receiving unit in NI, Cyprus or Germany is to collect the opposition from the airport and return them in a suitable vehicle. ARU funding will be for no more than 26 pax.

59. The ASCB shall fund the travel of teams in the semi finals and finals through POT 16.

Media Rights

60. Media Rights together with their sole right of exploitation save insofar as has otherwise been expressly agreed belong to the ARU.

61. Each Unit participating in the Competition will permit access to its ground to any person firm or company wishing to film, televise or broadcast any Competition match provided such filming, broadcasting or televising is undertaken by a Company to whom the ARU is aware.

Terms and Conditions of Participation

62. Each Unit is to maintain at all times during the season a sufficient number of available players to ensure the ability of the Unit to fulfil its programme of League Matches.

63. Each unit is to comply and to ensure and procure that its members and players are aware of agree to and agree to be bound by the RFU's disciplinary policies and their enforcement by the ARU in accordance with its published procedures.

Omissions Interpretations and Further Regulations

64. The chairman shall have absolute unfettered discretion to amend vary and/or make further regulations for the Competition provided that:

a. the chairman has consulted with any other interested party it in its sole discretion deems appropriate together with the Director Army Rugby.

b. the chairman is satisfied that any amendment variation or new regulation is in the interests of the game of rugby football in the competition.

65. The decision of the Director Army Rugby shall be final and binding.