

# Rugby League Ireland



## Operating Rules 2014



## **1. Aims and Objectives of RLI**

- 1.1 To Govern and represent Rugby League throughout Ireland
- 1.2 To foster, develop, extend and represent rugby league throughout Ireland and to maintain a close liaison and co-operation with all organisations relative to the development of rugby league, both nationally and internationally.
- 1.3 To make, adopt, vary and publish Operational Rules, regulations and conditions for the management of the amateur game and its competitions and matters relating thereto, and to take all such steps as shall be deemed necessary or advisable for enforcing such Operational Rules, regulations and conditions, including disciplinary investigation, prosecution and adjudication powers.
- 1.4 To organise and administer competitions for the playing of rugby league in Ireland.
- 1.5 To promote, provide for, regulate and manage all or any details or arrangements or other things as may be considered necessary or desirable for, or ancillary to, the comfort, conduct, convenience or benefit of players of rugby league and of the public or of any other persons concerned or engaged in or associated with RLI.
- 1.6 To exploit and sell and enter into contracts and other arrangements in relation to, and to take action to protect, all rights in or relating to rugby league and other intellectual property rights of RLI insofar as those rights are vested in or are managed by RLI.
- 1.7 To discipline players, Clubs and Members for breaches of the Operational Rules or the Laws of the Game and to adjudicate in respect of disputes between Clubs such discipline to allow delegating and/or referring disciplinary investigation, prosecution and adjudication powers to the RFL, RLEF or RLIF;
- 1.8 To do all such other acts or things, to enter into contracts and undertakings with others and to take such other steps as may in the opinion of RLI or its Board be conducive to the attainment or furtherance of the objects of RLI, including (but not limited to) entering into a Transfer Agreement, a Licence and/or a Services Agreement.
- 1.9 To commit to the principles of equal opportunities and to ensure that the culture, philosophy and processes within RLI and amateur rugby league are free from bias and discrimination



## 2. Membership

- 2.1 All Members of RLI (of whichever class as set out below) agree to abide by the Constitution and Operational Rules of RLI. All clubs, players, club officials, match officials and all other participants who participate in any league or competition or any game under the jurisdiction of RLI or organised by RLI are deemed by acceptance of the invitation to be bound by the Constitution and Operational Rules (including but not limited to those relating to discipline or misconduct), the Rules and Regulations of any body of which RLI is a member, the terms of any agreement entered into by the RLI and the Laws of the Game and accept the jurisdiction of RLI.
- 2.2 Membership of RLI shall be open to such National, Regional, or District Leagues playing or organising Community Amateur Rugby League as approved by RLI's board. No Member shall be entitled to be a Full Member until they have had their application approved by the RLI Board. At all meetings of the RLI General Assembly each Member shall be entitled to have two representatives in attendance. Any member in arrears with subscriptions by more than 3 months shall have with reduced membership rights until it clears all arrears owing.
- 2.3 Membership of RLI shall be open to such National, Regional, or District Leagues playing or organising Community Amateur Rugby League as approved by RLI's General Assembly. Members have the right to attend and speak at all General Assembly meetings, but shall have no voting rights.
- 2.4 Playing Membership shall be automatically conferred upon all players registered with clubs or teams who are affiliated members of RLI for so long as the relevant member league and member club remains a member of RLI. Playing Members have no right to attend or speak at General Assembly meetings, and shall have no voting rights.
- 2.5 Life Members may be appointed by the General Assembly following recommendation from the Board for outstanding services to the game. Life Members are entitled to attend and speak at all General Assembly meetings but shall have no voting rights.
- 2.6 Members shall not organise or play against any club, team or leagues that are not members of RLI without written permission of the RLI Board of Management and the appropriate governing bodies of the countries concerned.
- 2.7 Save where provided to the contrary in the Constitution or Operational Rules, any Amateur Rugby League player, coach, official or referee is free to participate in any other sport of their choice without fear of discrimination by RLI.
- 2.8 No Member shall be allowed to withdraw from RLI until that Member's liabilities to RLI have been discharged.



## **3. Provincial Leagues**

- 3.1 Any player currently contracted to a Rugby Football League club as a professional is not eligible to play in this competition.
- 3.2 Only three ex-professional players per team are allowed to participate. It should be noted that once two years have elapsed from the date of a player's last professional appearance that he will no longer count as an ex-professional in any match played thereafter. Clubs are responsible for checking details of their ex-professional players and ensuring that the correct quotas are played in RLI competitions.
- 3.3 The closing date for entries will be determined by the Playing Panel each season and the entry fee will be determined by the Finance Panel.
- 3.4 All clubs must complete and submit a Rugby League Ireland audit form before the commencement of the first game of the season.
- 3.5 Any team that fails to fulfil its obligations will be deemed to be guilty of bringing the game in to disrepute. The disciplinary panel appointed by the board of RLI will decide what penalty(s) will apply in each case.
- 3.6 No player shall play for more than one club per season, unless by agreement of the RLI Playing Panel or in the event of a loan player being used to enable a fixture to be played with the agreement of both clubs and the match official involved in said game.
- 3.7 Any team found playing an ineligible player shall be fined a maximum of two competition points and forfeit the match by standard score of 18-0. If the game is a play off or final game then the game will be awarded to the other team.
- 3.8 All players must play in at least two league or cup games to be eligible to play in any semi-final, final or representative fixture.
- 3.9 Clubs may reschedule matches, as long as both teams agree to new time and the RLI playing panel is notified in advance of the scheduled kick off time. In respect of rescheduled matches, i.e weekend of inter-provincials it would be recommended that the match take place within 5 days either side of scheduled match day.
- 3.10 The kick-off time for all scheduled Saturday games shall be 2.00pm unless the playing panel is notified otherwise. Referees must report teams responsible for late kick-offs.
- 3.11 Each team must register its colours with Rugby League Ireland and in the event of a colour clash the away team must change.
- 3.12 Postponed games must normally be re-arranged for the following weekend. Should the ground look likely to be unfit for a second time, the playing panel will have the discretion to determine an alternative venue, which may mean the game will be transferred to their opponents ground.



- 3.13 The home team must provide directions to their ground to opponents and match officials at least 48 hours prior to kick off - this information should also include club colours so as to avoid a clash.
- 3.14 Any team failing to play a fixture on the scheduled day without following the correct procedures shall be in breach of the rules of RLI. The match will be awarded, to their opponents with a score line of 30-0. Only in exceptional circumstances shall a League rule otherwise. Further breaches of this rule will result in penalties as deemed fit by the Playing panel
- 3.15 Points allocated for the league table are as follows:
- Lose 0
  - Draw 1
  - Win 2
- 3.16 Table positions shall be decided on points gained per game
- *In the event two teams have equal points, their positions shall be determined by:*
    - *The difference in their match point for and against.*
    - *In the event that these points are the same they shall be separated by the aggregate score of games between the two clubs*

## **4. Match Day**

- 4.1 The home team must:
- Contact the person appointing the referee and obtain the name of the referee so as to give travel directions and full details of the game
  - Contact your opponents regarding club colour's and travel directions
  - Notify the RLI Administration of the result of the match within one hour of the final whistle.
- \*Any team in default of the above will be fined up to a maximum of 2 points*
- 4.2 Both the match official and visiting team should contact the home team prior to setting off to confirm the ground is fit for play. Playing areas must be correctly enclosed or roped off so as to keep spectators from the field of play.
- 4.3 If the home club consider the ground unfit, they must inform both the match official and the visiting team prior to them setting off. If they fail to do so and the ground is classed unfit by the match official the home team will forfeit the game unless this is due to adverse weather conditions that may occur after the parties have departed.
- 4.4 Where possible all grounds should be set to play the sport of Rugby League.
- 4.5 If circumstances prevent full duration of the playing time, then the clubs may agree to a shorter playing time. This must be confirmed with the referee prior to kick-off.
- 4.6 The home team is responsible for the presenting the referee with a team sheet as well as any other documentation the referee may require. It is the responsibility of the referee to send the team sheet to the RLI administrator.



- 4.7 The manager, coach, physiotherapist and water carrier must be identified to the referee before the game starts. The physiotherapist and the water carrier are the only people allowed on the pitch to attend to players whilst the match is on.
- 4.8 It is the duty of each club to give maximum publicity of the game to their local media ensuring that subsequent match previews and reports are issued.
- 4.9 All clubs must ensure that jerseys worn in the competition are numbered 1 - 20. Clubs in default will be fined up to a maximum of 2 points.
- 4.10 All players on the side line must wear an article of clothing to cover their jersey to distinguish them from players on the field of play. Any player not wearing a vest will be classed as been on the field of play and deemed to be a fourteenth man. A penalty will be awarded against the offending team.
- 4.11 No team shall field a squad of more than 20 players in anyone game. Unlimited rolling substitutes are permitted for domestic club games. No team shall commence a game with less than 9 players and may play the first half of the game with no less than 9 players. Where such an instance occurs said team must have at least 12 players available to commence the second half. If any team is unable to meet said requirements then the match shall be abandoned and an 18 – 0 victory awarded to the other team involved.
- 4.12 Kick off time. In the case of a dispute between two clubs the official kick off time is Saturday at 14.00 hrs. Any change in kick off time or venue must be agreed with the RLI Playing Panel. In any case where a conflict of interests maybe deemed to apply then the board of RLI will make the final decision. Any team arriving more than 30 minutes late may be deemed to have lost the game as per match official's decision. The clubs involved may appeal this decision to the Playing Panel for final judgement.

## **5. Semi - Final and Grand Final Rules**

- 5.1 RLI shall decide the venues for all semi-finals and finals. These games will be controlled by leading amateur graded officials, who shall be selected and appointed by the Board of Management or its representative
- 5.2 In the event of a draw the match shall go into extra time. 20 minutes each way
- 5.3 In the event of a draw after extra time a kick for goal shall be used to decide the winner.
- Three shots shall be taken at goal by each team
  - One player from each team will be allowed to take all kicks for goal
  - All kicks shall be taken from the 20 metre line
    - I. Centre of line
    - II. Left 10 metre intersection
    - III. Right 10 metre intersection
- 5.4 In the event of a draw after the three kicks the decider will then go in to sudden death following the above sequence. The same player may take all the kicks.



- 5.5 Playing areas must be correctly enclosed or roped off so as to keep spectators from the field of play.
- 5.6 All grounds must be marked out for the purpose of playing the sport of Rugby League.
- 5.7 All players must play in at least two league or cup games to be eligible to play in any semi-final or final.

## **6. Representative Rugby (Regional and Ireland A)**

- 6.1 All players must play in at least two league games or to be eligible
- 6.2 Any player selected for representative duty must have played been selected to play, trained or made themselves available for the County Team in the current season
- 6.3 Any club with three or more players selected to play in a recognised Open Age representative match may, if they so desire, postpone their club fixture for that particular weekend. The weekend shall be deemed as Friday, Saturday, Sunday or Monday. Application must be made no later than 72 hours before the kick-off of the game in question and they must also make their opponents aware of this at the same time.
- 6.4 Appointed coaches must hold at least a Senior Coach certificate or its equivalent
- 6.5 Where a player does not meet the above criteria a decision will be decided on by the relevant Playing panel.

## **7. Discipline**

- 7.1 An RLI Disciplinary Committee appointed by the Board of Management shall deal with disciplinary matters involving matches under the direct jurisdiction of RLI. This committee are also appointed to deal with any matter referred to it by the RLI board
- 7.2 The Disciplinary Committee shall have full power to adjudicate upon all leagues, clubs, players or persons reported by any match officials for any reason whatsoever arising from any game under their control. This also includes representative games.
- 7.3 The Disciplinary Committee shall have full power to deal with all leagues, clubs, players or persons without the need of a match official's report if they have committed an act or made any statement either verbally or in writing or been responsible for conduct, continuing misconduct or any matter which in the opinion of the Committee is considered to be unsporting, insulting or improper behaviour or likely to bring the game into disrepute. Any act, statement, conduct or matter which is discriminatory by reason of sex, sexual orientation, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or disability shall constitute behaviour in contravention of this clause. This also includes representative and international A games.



- 7.4 Disciplinary Committees have full power to expel, suspend and/or fine any organisation, player, official or any other person found guilty of misconduct and/or any breach of the rules and order them to meet any costs incurred.
- 7.5 Disciplinary Committees shall deal with all reported offences without undue delay but no later than 31 days of the alleged offence. In cases falling within rule 7.3 they may be dealt with without time limit.
- 7.6 A match official's written report on the misconduct of any organisation, player, official or any person shall be sent to the Disciplinary Committee within five working days of the game's conclusion with a copy to the reported party.
- 7.7 Teams must ensure that the referee is given the full name of any dismissed player and give every assistance to any match official, to identify any official, spectator or other person about whom they have cause to enquire.
- 7.8 Every team is required to take all necessary precautions to prevent assaults or threats on players or officials, in connection with games.
- 7.9 A referee shall have the power to order the temporary suspension, for a period of ten minutes, of a player whose conduct does not warrant a full dismissal.
- 7.8 Any team not in receipt of a dismissal report from a match official within 7 days of a game's conclusion must immediately contact the Playing Panel.
- 7.9 All reported persons may request a personal hearing and bring witnesses in their own defence, send a written statement, or provide unedited video tape evidence providing application is received by the RLI Board within seven days of the game's conclusion and be accompanied by a personal hearing deposit fee of €40.00 which is to be returned if the appellant attends the hearing
- 7.10 If, during the game, an assault on a match official, a brawl or abandonment occurs, the referee must report such occurrence to the Playing Panel within 48 hours of the game's conclusion by telephone and confirm in writing within five working days with a copy to the reported party.
- 7.11 In all cases of Discipline or disputes, claims of non-receipt of any relevant correspondence shall not preclude any matter from being dealt with.
- 7.12 Decisions of a Disciplinary Committee shall be sent via email within 48 hours of a meeting.
- 7.13 At all discipline hearings, three members, one who will act as Chair, and one who will act as Secretary shall form a quorum.





## 8. Appeals

- 8.1 The Board shall appoint a RLI Discipline Appeals Committee and it shall be responsible for hearing all appeals against the decisions made by the RLI Disciplinary Committee or decisions made by Organisations in membership of RLI. No person who was at the original hearing, other than the Secretary or their representative, shall be eligible to participate as a member of the Committee.
- 8.2 Every organisation and player wishing to appeal against decisions by the RLI Disciplinary Committee or other Organisations must do so in writing, to be received by the RLI Board within (10)ten days of the decision being made. The appeal fee of **xxxxx** must accompany each appeal application, which may be returned or forfeit as the Committee so decides. Unedited videotape evidence may be submitted.
- 8.3 No Appeal shall be heard, unless the appellant has made representation at the original hearing, either personally or by a representative or in writing.
- 8.4 In instances where a player has received a suspension, there shall be only two grounds for appeal. Namely:  
(a) severity of sentence or  
(b) the finding of guilt.
- 8.5 All appeals shall be heard, within fourteen days of the appeal being lodged.
- 8.6 At appeal hearings, three members, one who will act as Chair and one who will act as Secretary shall form a quorum.
- 8.7 Decisions of the Appeals Committee are final and in cases where the appeal is turned down a decision could be taken to double the original sentence.

## 9. Suspensions and Fines

- 9.1 A player's suspension will commence on the second Saturday, following the meeting at which the suspension was imposed, except in the case of suspensions of six or more matches or Sine Die suspensions, which will have immediate effect. Two or more suspensions must be served consecutively. A player is allowed to play pending appeal if the suspension is less than 6 matches.
- 9.2 The following games shall count towards a player's suspensions:
- 9.2.1 All registered team games, scheduled prior to the offence, representative games, in which the player has been selected to play and games awarded by default. Abandoned games shall only count if points are awarded or if the result is allowed to stand.
- 9.3 No person under suspension by the RLI or club shall participate in playing, coaching, officiating or administrating within Ireland, without the RLI's permission, until all suspensions are served.



- 9.4 A suspended player is not allowed to play in any other game of Rugby League Football until their suspension has been completed and any club or region found guilty of violating this rule shall forfeit the game and the offending player may be liable to a further suspension.
- 9.5 Any suspensions, notified to the RLI by other Sporting Authorities, shall be honoured unless special circumstances apply.
- 9.6 A player who has been fined shall not play in any game until the fine is paid. Should the fine not be paid within 28 days of imposition it will automatically double. If the fine is still not paid, further action will be taken. The player's club, county in representative games, is responsible for the collection and forwarding of the money to the RLI.
- 9.7 An automatic Sine Die suspension shall be imposed upon any person found guilty of assaulting a match official. No review of that suspension, after any initial appeal, may take place until 2 to 5 years have elapsed from the date that the suspension was imposed.

## **10. Equal Opportunities**

- 10.1 RLI will act in accordance with the Association's equal opportunities policy.
- 10.2 RLI are committed to eradicating all forms of racial discrimination and racism, a commitment that will enhance equality of opportunity in all aspects of the game. Racist language or behaviour has no part to play within the game and as a result will not be tolerated. Anyone that engages in racist behaviour will be dealt with promptly through the relevant procedures. We must all be responsible for tackling racism and ensure that Rugby League is a game that can be enjoyed by everyone.
- 10.3 If a club or an individual associated with a club is found to be guilty of a racially based offence arising from a disciplinary hearing then RLI reserves the right to report the club or the individual concerned to the appropriate Authority.

***NB. Any issue or matters arising during the course of the 2014 domestic rugby league season not deemed to be covered by the rules and regulations above may, at the discretion of the Rugby League Ireland Playing Panel and or the board of Rugby League Ireland, be referred to the Rugby League Ireland Disciplinary Panel as constituted by the board of Rugby league Ireland for review and judgement.***

