



NRLA

NIGERIA RUGBY LEAGUE ASSOCIATION

2018

RULES AND REGULATIONS

[Dated: 14th July 2017]

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1.0 NIGERIA RUGBY LEAGUE (“NRLA”) NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

1.1 General

- (a) All participating clubs shall ensure that their players, coaches and club officials agree, without reservation, to abide by these Rules and Regulations pertaining to the NRLA (National Championship): Premiership, Playoffs and Championship Final; as set out hereunder.
- (b) All matches in the NRLA will be played in accordance with the International Laws of the Game as current at the time of the Championship.
- (c) Variances to the International Laws of the Game are noted in these Rules and Regulations; as ratified by the NRLA (Nigeria Rugby League Association) Board for the purpose of competitions governed by the NRLA.
- (d) The NRLA: Executive Board has appointed and empowered a Tournament Director (General Manager) to oversee and manage the NRLA (Nigeria Rugby League) National Championship.
- (e) Any proposed variances to these Rules & Regulations will be at the discretion of the NRLA: Executive Board; as and when approved and sanctioned by the NRLA: Board and subsequent notification of all participating clubs.

1.2 Premiership

- (a) The 2019 NRLA Premiership (*i.e. the regular season*) will consist of Four (4) games per club.
- (b) Championship: matches will be played for championship points to qualify for the end-of-season Playoffs by gaining the greater number of points for win and drawn matches on the Championship Table. The club at the top of the table will be the 2019 NRLA Premiers. The following championship points system shall apply:
 - (i) Two (2) championship points for a win;
 - (ii) One (1) championship point for a draw;
 - (iii) Zero (0) championship points for a defeat;

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- (iv) A loss of three (-3) championship points for a team who forfeits.¹
- (c) If two or more participating clubs finish equal on championship points after completion of the Premiership, their relative positions on the Championship Table shall be determined as follows:
- (i) The team having the greater points difference shall be placed ahead of other teams (points difference is calculated by subtracting the match points scored against a team from the match points scored by the team); if teams are still equal; then the team having the greater points percentage shall be placed ahead (points percentage is calculated by dividing the number of points scored by a team by the number of points it concedes and multiplied by 100); if teams are still equal then:
 - (ii) The team that has the greater head-to-head record within the Premiership, between the two teams, shall be placed ahead of the other team; if the teams are still equal then:
 - (iii) The team who has scored the most tries in all the regular season games will be placed ahead of a team who has scored less tries; if the teams are still equal then:
 - (iv) The team who has kicked the most goals in all the regular season games will be placed ahead of a team who has kicked less goals; if the teams are still equal then:
 - (v) The team that won the last match in the Premiership, between the two teams, shall be placed ahead of the other team; if the teams are still equal then:
 - (vi) The order between the relevant team(s) will be decided by coin toss.

1.3 Playoffs

The top two (2) clubs from The North League and the South West League will qualify for the NRLA: 2019 Playoff Series. A Semi-Final match will be played between the 1st- & 2nd- seeded teams in both leagues, to determine the teams who will play to be the 2019 NRLA Premiers in the NRLA: 2019 Championship Final. The winner of this match will be the 2019 NRLA National Champions.

¹ Any forfeit and subsequent loss of championship points will be at the discretion of- & review by- the NRLA Judiciary, and determined within one week of the scheduled match and relevant offense, unless a valid and approved appeal has been launched. Consequences of a forfeit may include additional Championship Points Deductions, Fines and/or Penalties applied to Clubs.

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Should a Playoff match or the Championship Final be drawn after 80 minutes of playing time, 2 x 10min halves of extra-time will be played to determine the winner. Should the game be drawn at the completion of extra-time the game will continue into additional “Golden Point” extra-time. The team scoring first in this extra-time will be the winner by “Golden Point”.

- (a) Semi-Final: The Number 1 seeded team on the League table will play the Number 2 seeded team, at the grounds of the Number 1 team, as determined and approved by the NRLA: TED (Title Events Department).
- (b) Championship Final: The match will be played between the winners of each of the Semi-Final fixtures, at neutral grounds, as determined and approved by the NRLA: TED (Title Events Department).

2.0 FORMAT OF MATCHES

2.1 Match Commencement, Delays, Duration and Number of Players

- (a) Matches are to start at the scheduled kick-off time. Should a team be delayed, they must notify the Tournament Director (General Manager unless delegated otherwise) no less than one (1) hour before the scheduled kick-off time.
- (b) Delayed matches can be played if both coaches or club officials *and* Referee agree unanimously. The Referee will have the deciding vote and provide a report of the delayed start to the Tournament Director.
- (c) The coin toss will be in accordance with the International Laws. The Match Officials will toss the coin for the visiting team to call. The winner of the toss will have the choice of either:
 - Side of Field, *or*
 - Option to kick-off at the start of the game.
- (d) Each match shall be of 80 minutes duration, consisting of 2 x 40 minute halves. There shall be a half-time interval of 10 minutes.

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- (e) Teams alternate their sides of the field at half-time, and also alternate kick-offs in each half. In other words, teams swap their sides of the field at half-time, and the team that kicks-off at the start of the game will receive the ball at the start of the second-half.
- (f) The Referee will be the official timekeeper, unless the Referee designates the 4th Official as the timekeeper. Should the Referee employ a timekeeper, both teams' coaches, club official and captain must be made aware of the agreed upon mode of signaling for the end of each half of the game. Notwithstanding, the Referee shall be responsible for signaling the official start- *and* end- of play using his whistle.
- (g) The game shall be played with each team having not more than thirteen (13) and not less than nine (9) players on the playing field at any one time.
- (h) Within the NRLA, each team may have up to four (4) interchange players, and use up to twelve (10) interchanges during the course of a match.
- (i) If a team has less than eleven (11) players, both coaches and the referee shall decide if the game is to be played or not. If the decision is for the game not to be played then appropriate action will be decided by the NRLA: Judiciary and may include Championship Points Deduction, Fines and/or Penalties applied to Clubs, and/or Suspension from the NRLA.

2.2 Postponed Matches

- (a) If a match is postponed due to bad or inclement weather or an "Act of God", then the match will be replayed on such date and at a venue and time as agreed by the Tournament Director (General Manager unless delegated otherwise) in consultation with the two affected clubs.
- (b) If a match must be postponed and rescheduled, it is the responsibility of the Tournament Director to notify all parties concerned immediately following the decision.
- (c) In the event of a match that cannot be played, and after attempts to reschedule have been exhausted, the Tournament Director may decide to waive the match, so long as it has no bearing on Championship Table positions; as and when approved and sanctioned by the NRLA: Executive Board and subsequent notification of all participating clubs.

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- (d) If a club requires rescheduling a match due to circumstances not related to inclement weather, “Act of God”, hazard or emergency, they must send a request in writing to the Tournament Director at least forty-eight (48) hours prior to the date and time of the original game.
- (e) A club failing to fulfill a fixture without a satisfactory reason, or forfeiting a fixture, shall be referred by the Tournament Director for sanctioning by the NRLA: Judiciary; which may lead to fines or financial recovery [including, but not limited to, the cost of field hire, travel expenses and match officials] and championship points deducted.

2.3 Abandoned, Incomplete and Forfeit Matches

- (a) If a match cannot be completed due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. “Act of God”, inclement weather, player injury, player/spectator safety, power failure, etc.) or a team is reduced to less than nine (9) players, it will be considered completed if at least 60 minutes (or three-quarters) have been played. If 60 minutes cannot be played then the game will be rescheduled, unless the Match Officials (with consultation of both coaches) agree unanimously to accept the score at the time the match was stopped as the final result. When the Tournament Director (General Manager unless delegated otherwise) subsequently endorses such decision, it shall be final and not subject to appeal.
- (b) A match is forfeited, unless the Referee or Tournament Director is notified otherwise, when less than eleven (11) players from either team are available to take the field at the scheduled start time.
- (c) If a match is forfeited, it counts as a loss for the team that has failed to meet its requirements. The opposing team will be awarded the win 30-0, as well as the championship points for the win. No individual player will be accredited these points.
- (d) If a match is forfeited, players who are under Judicial Suspension shall not be eligible to count the forfeited match toward the number of games served within their suspension.
- (e) Any Club Playoff match that is forfeited will result in the culpable team being disqualified from the NRLA Playoffs, referred to the NRLA Judicial Branch for sanctioning, *and* automatically be awarded a minus three (-3) Championship Points deduction to the subsequent the following Premiership Ladder.

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3.0 ON-FIELD

- (a) Each team must play in NRLA approved player apparel. Failure to wear approved player apparel will be referred to the NRLA: Judiciary for consideration of disciplinary action and may result in a fine and/or loss of championship points.
- (b) Kick Off: *See: 2.1 (a)*
- (c) Sin Bin [Yellow Card]: When the referee sends a player to the Sin Bin they cannot be replaced. It is mandatory for a sin-binned player to remain as near as possible to the Fourth Official and is not permitted to sit with their respective team's interchange bench. [*See 9.2 (c)*]
- (d) Send Off [Red Card]: A player sent-off from the field by the Referee will take no further part in the match and will remain outside the playing area for the duration of the match or for the duration of any subsequent suspension. [*See 9.2 (d)*]

4.0 PLAYING KIT

4.1 Colors

Each participating club is required to advise, and register with, the NRLA Tournament Director (General Manager unless delegated otherwise), their respective club's attire design *and* colors (including exact pantones) by 31st September 2018.

Where, in the opinion of the Tournament Director, the registered colors of two clubs are likely to cause confusion, the Tournament Director will confirm the first club to register their colors and advise the other club that either: (i) a change of colors is required, or (ii) an alternative kit needs to be sourced.

4.2 Numbering of Players

Players' numbers will be displayed on the player's back, be not less than nine inches (9") in height and be clearly visible and must stand out from the surrounding background.

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4.3 *NRLA Logo*

All teams are required to display the NRLA Championship Logo on the right breast of the Jersey. Alternatively, clubs are allowed to display the official NRLA Logo on the right breast of the Jersey, as long as they also display the NRLA Championship Logo on both sleeves of the Jersey.

5.0 MATCH-DAY REQUIREMENTS

5.1 *General*

- (a) The host team is responsible for making all necessary arrangements for hosting the match at the venue including but not limited to those set out in the NRLA: Minimum Standards and NRLA Franchise Licensing Agreement.²
- (b) The host team shall ensure that when hosting a NRLA fixture, it complies with all applicable Local, Regional and National Laws, and obtains all necessary licenses and permits to operate the event.

5.2 *Commercial Rights*

Each Participating team agrees that the NRLA has the right to grant any sponsorship, media and/or other commercial rights (the “Commercial Rights”) in relation to the Championship, and agrees to comply with the terms of all such agreements as advised to it from time to time.

All teams acknowledge that the NRLA holds all Commercial Rights for any match in the NRLA Championship and will be awarding exclusive rights in respect to certain goods and services in connection with the NRLA to commercial partners. The host team must therefore not hold itself as being entitled to sell rights in relation to the NRLA and shall not sell Commercial Rights in any matches in the Championship in any manner which might imply a connection between the Championship and/or NRLA.

² **TBA:** The NRLA Franchise Licensing Agreement pertains toward a NRLA Club/Regional Development Contract, inclusive of a Minimum Standards Document.

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The hosting team must seek NRLA approval for any proposed grants and/or sales of Commercial Rights to avoid any conflicts with the NRLA.

5.3 *Field Markings*³

Field markings should be in reference to, and as near as possible, the International Laws of the Game, as set out in the NRLA Minimum Standards document. It is the responsibility of the host team to ensure field markings meet these standards.

5.4 *Posts and Post Protectors*

It is the host club's responsibility to ensure that the posts are fit for purpose and are secured to the ground. Hybrid posts (such as those attached above soccer post) or Gridiron posts are acceptable. Goal posts are required to be suitably protected. Corner posts for the goal line should be in reference to the International Laws of the Game and of a soft or thin fiberglass material. Other field posts and flags should be of similar material at least one (1) meter outside of the touch-line. [Note: PVC piping should not be used for fear of snapping and creating splinters.]

6.0 TEAMS

6.1 *Medical Provisions and Emergency Management Plan*

- (a) All participant clubs shall provide, during all matches, ample water and at least one (1) qualified Athletic Trainer or Physiotherapist, preferably assisting a qualified Doctor. All medical personnel should be made available to opposition teams and Match Officials for treatment, if required.

- (b) Each club should develop an Emergency Management Plan in conjunction with local Police, Ambulance or Emergency Response personnel. This should include a Crisis Communications Plan to appropriately manage the message that is invariably propagated as a result of a severe event and/or crisis involving a club, player, coach, club official, or club fan.

³ See Appendix I: Rugby League Football – Field Dimensions

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6.2 Communication

- (a) Each club must provide the Tournament Director (General Manager unless delegated otherwise) with contact details of their club's match-day official for the purpose of emergencies and as a spokesperson for media reports.
- (b) All players, coaches and club officials should be aware they could be required for media calls and comments. They should make themselves reasonably available for such activities and keep all comments associated only to their club and not the Match Officials or the NRLA.
- (c) Any comments made to the public or press by any player, coach or club official, that are found to be derogatory in their nature, could be guilty of misconduct and will be referred to the NRLA: Judiciary and/or the NRLA: Board.

7.0 MATCH OFFICIALS

- (a) Any player, coach or club official wishing to speak to the Match Officials should do so through the Fourth-Official. And any person outside of the Playing Area wishing to speak to the Match Officials should do so through the Tournament Director (General Manager unless delegated otherwise).
- (b) All clubs should ensure that Match Officials are not subjected to abuse, derogative comments or harassment on the field, entering the field or leaving the field.
- (c) Should a spectator, player, coach or club official have an issue with a Match Official, it should be raised initially with the applicable club official who is to immediately contact the NRLA: MOD [Match Officials Department] and the NRLA Tournament Director.

7.1 Selection

Match Officials will be appointed at the sole discretion of the MOD [Match Officials Department]. The appointments of the four (4) Officials: Referee, two (2) Touch-Judges and the Fourth-Official for each match, shall aspire to be neutral, in terms of club/regional affiliation, to the Participating Teams in the match.

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7.2 Appointment

The MOD shall advise club officials of Match Officials appointments no later than 48 hours prior to start of match. Should an appointed Match Official be injured prior to, or unable to attend the match, then the MOD may appoint a substitute Match Official at their discretion; should no other Match Officials be in attendance and/or available.

7.3 Match Officials Costs

All costs for Match Official will be met by the NRLA and the MOD directly, and under no circumstances is a club to provide match officials with any form of remuneration. Any breach in this article will be immediately reported by the match official to the Tournament Director, and subject to review by the NRLA: Judiciary.

7.4 Decision of Match Officials

Decisions made by Match Officials during a match relating to the Laws of the Game shall be final and not subject to objections or appeal.

7.5 Interchange Procedure

- (a) Each team will be provided a set of twelve (10) interchange cards, numbered 1 – 10, and shall be allowed to make twelve (10) interchanges from those players named on their respective team's official team sheet.
- (b) The Fourth Official (or official Touch Judge) present will be responsible to manage the interchange process.
- (c) Interchange Cards must be used and presented in order to allow for an interchange to be processed. If a player report to the Fourth-Official without a card, he will be sent back to the bench to obtain a card before the interchange will be allowed. [NB: Interchange Cards should be used in sequential numerical order; starting with Card #1 during the first interchange, and ending with Card #1 during the final, twelfth interchange.]
- (d) Interchanges may take place during general play, after any scoring has been completed, when the ball is out of play, or when play has been temporarily suspended by the Referee.

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- (e) Interchanges cannot be made after the Referee has ordered a scrum until the scrum has been completed. A Player leaving the field may do so at any time but their replacement cannot enter the field until the ball emerges from the scrum. An interchange may take place at a scrum only if the Referee has temporarily called time-off.
- (f) Prior to an interchange being made, the Player going on to the field must report to the Fourth-Official (or Touch-Judge). Once the Player who is to be withdrawn has exited the playing field, the Player going onto the field will submit their interchange card to the official and then be given permission to enter the playing field, and the Player must enter the playing field from an on-side position.
- (g) If a player is sent from the field or sin binned, a replacement cannot be made for that player until the subsequent time has elapsed.
- (h) Failure to comply with the interchange rule may be treated as misconduct by the Referee and subject to both a report to the Tournament Director and sanctioning by the NRLA: Judiciary.
- (i) Each participating team will be responsible for ensuring compliance with the interchange procedures. Failure to comply will result in an investigation and possible disciplinary action.

8.0 MATCH DAY PROTOCOL

8.1 Videography

The NRLA shall arrange for each club's match to be filmed from the halfway line, in the grandstand, and will provide each participating team with a copy of such film as soon as practicable after each match. Each participating team shall pay fees for this service as part of their annual dues, and any failure to meet this financial obligation shall be reported to the NRLA: Judiciary for review and disciplinary action.

8.2 Dressing Rooms

The host team will specify which dressing room each team will occupy. It is compulsory for all teams to use the dressing rooms. Failure to comply will result in NRLA: Judiciary review and disciplinary action.

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8.3 Match Balls

The NRLA will provide three (3) Rugby League match footballs for use on game-day. These are to be examined and approved by the Match Officials prior to use.

8.4 Kick Off

Each participating team shall ensure that its team is ready to take to the field as and when directed by the Match Officials, which is usually be no less than two minutes before the start of each half.

8.5 Team Sheets

- (a) A team sheet, approved by the Tournament Director (General Manager unless delegated otherwise), must be completed by each team, with one copy submitted to the opposing team and another to the Fourth-Official (or Referee), no later than fifteen (15) minutes prior to kick off.
- (b) A maximum of seventeen (17) players named on the team sheet will be allowed to take part in a NRLA match fixture. If there is any change in the seventeen (17) players listed after the team sheet has been submitted, the Match Official must be advised for his approval. Furthermore, the Match Officials should report any discrepancies between the names listed on the team sheets and the players registered to a Club roster to the NRLA Tournament Director. The team sheet must also list the MOD personnel who are on duty for that game.

8.6 Results & Match Reporting

- (a) Both club officials, in consultation with the referee, must agree on the final score immediately on completion of the match, and text message and/or e-mail the result to the NRLA CMO and/or the NRLA Media Officer.⁴ The result must identify the match winner, and list the score for each half. For example:
 - Draw: Immortals vs. Tripoli
 - Immortals RLFC [4] **18** | Tripoli RLFC [16] **18**
 - *i.e.* Club Name [*1st half score*] **Final Score**

⁴ Insert: Name | Cell Number | E-Mail Address

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- (b) A match report must be compiled by each club and e-mailed to the NRLA CMO and/or the NRLA Media Officer as soon as possible on completion of the match, and subject to media deadlines [being 11:59pm the Sunday following of the match]. The match report must include the date, time & location of the match, as well as the full-names of all points' scorers, and all players who were Sin-Binned or Sent Off and for what offense they were penalized.
- (c) Immediately upon conclusion of the match, the referee must notify the MOD Chairperson and the NRLA Tournament Director of any resulting on-field disciplinary action; including players placed on report, and the award plus recipient name of any yellow- or red- cards. Their referee's notification must then include an official written report, e-mailed to the MOD *and* the Tournament Director, no later than 24 hours following the match. This report is then to immediately be forwarded for review by the NRLA: Judiciary.

8.7 *On-Field Team Personnel*

8.7.1 **Athletic Trainer** [Yellow Tops]

- (a) An Athletic Trainer may enter the playing field at any time, behind play, and must not interfere with the progress of play, nor are they entitled to communicate with a Match Official, unless a serious injury has occurred.
- (b) They must enter and leave the field as quickly as possible.
- (c) An Athletic Trainer may enter the field to inform a player that he is being interchanged, and may remain on the pitch for a maximum of three tackles whilst carrying out this duty.
- (d) In the case of a breach by the Athletic Trainer the Referee will stop the game and provide a warning to the Trainer. Should further breaches occur the Referee can send the Athletic Trainer from the Playing Area, and the affected team will not be allowed to use a member of staff for interchanges for the remainder of the game.

8.7.2 **Medical** [Orange Tops]

- (a) The team's Medical staff is allowed unlimited access to the playing field to directly render assistance to injured players, and in stances of severe injury may indicate to the Referee that the game should be stopped.

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- (b) They must enter and leave the field as quickly as possible.
- (c) They are not allowed to pass on messages at any time, nor are they allowed to be involved in the on-field interchange process; save that when they go onto treat a player, they may assist bringing they player off the field (*i.e.* escort him to the touch line for further treatment).

8.7.3 Water Carrier [*Blue Tops*]

- (a) Only one (1) water carrier is permitted to enter the field of play in the following circumstances:
 - (i) In General-Play, while their team is in possession of the ball, and only from behind play.
 - (ii) After a Try has been scored.
 - (iii) During a stoppage in time, such as when the Referee has stopped play for an injury.
- (b) They must enter and leave the field as quickly as possible.
- (c) They must carry an approved water-carrying device or unit, and must leave the field before play has recommenced.

8.8 Technical Areas / Interchange Bench

- (a) The host club will specify which technical area / interchange bench, inside the Playing Area, each team will occupy during the course of the match. Both technical areas must be visibly marked or outlined with the same dimensions.
- (b) A maximum of four (4) team officials and four (4) interchange players will be allowed to sit in the team technical area / interchange bench, inside the Playing Area.
- (c) Only registered players, medical staff and coaching staff will be allowed to sit on the interchange bench.
- (d) All other personnel are to remain outside the designated Playing Area.

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- (e) All personnel must remain seated on the interchange bench and inside a marked technical area unless they are in the act of warming up, the mode of being interchanged, seeking medical attention or attending to their on-field duties, including at the half-time interval.
- (f) Any personnel from the interchange bench not seated, behaving in a manner of misconduct or not in the best interest of the Game, will be requested by the Referee to leave the Playing Area and may go on report to the NRLA: Judiciary.
- (g) No player, spectator or person will enter the Playing Area without due cause or become involved in any on-field altercations. In the case of an on-field altercation, any player, staff member or coach that leaves their technical area to intervene will be sent from the Playing Area, and subject to a full written report and the strictest disciplinary review from the NRLA: Judiciary.
- (h) All personnel in the technical area / interchange bench must be properly attired at all times in suitable clothing [e.g. a tank top / vest / t-shirt and shorts / tracksuit bottoms / trousers].
- (i) No spectators shall be allowed to watch a fixture from any place that is deemed unsafe by the Tournament Director or Match Officials. The Referee should stop the game if any spectator encroaches on such an area, to be monitored by the Fourth Official. (Example: the roof of the Bhamdoun Stadium.)

8.9 Bleeding Players

The following procedure will apply in all cases where a player is bleeding or his person, clothing or equipment has been contaminated by blood:

- (a) If the referee notices a bleeding or blood contaminated player he will immediately stop play and signal the player is to leave the field of play, at which time the player can be interchanged;
- (b) A player who was ordered from the field by the Referee because of bleeding, who has not been interchanged, is not to be regarded as an interchange player, and therefore may return to the field of play at any time and is permitted to take a kick for goal.

8.10 Stitching / Strapping

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Any player who is bleeding and requires treatment by way of either stitching, strapping or otherwise, must be taken to the team dressing room or shared medical facility so this procedure can be conducted out of the view of the general public. After treatment, the wound must be bandaged or covered to protect the injury and to eliminate the risk of further bleeding.

8.11 Contaminated Clothing

In a case where a player's person, clothing or equipment has been contaminated by blood, the referee may stop play immediately and signal for the player to leave the field and require the replacement of clothing, equipment or bandages. This player is subject to the same interchange rules as outlined in Section 8.9(b) above.

9.0 MISCONDUCT

9.1 Behavior Considered Misconduct

All participating clubs shall ensure that their players, coaches and club officials shall, at all times, behave in the highest standards, and are bound by the provisions of these Rules and Regulations and the NRLA: Codes of Conduct.

A player, coach or club official may be guilty of misconduct if he/she:

- (a) Commits a serious or persistent breach of these NRLA Rules and Regulations;
- (b) Without limiting **Article 9.1(a)** above, commits a breach of any of the rules listed in **Article 10** below;
- (c) Engages in conduct that is prejudicial to the interests of NRLA matches, the NRLA or NRLA Members;
- (d) Is convicted of a criminal offense by any court of competent jurisdiction;
- (e) Fails, within the time allowed, to comply with any decision of the NRLA: Judiciary, the NRLA: Executive Board and/or NRLA: Board.

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9.2 Proceedings for an Offense or Breach

- [a] In a case where a Team, Player, Coach or Team Personnel has failed to comply with a provision of these Rules and Regulations, proceedings may be taken against that Team, Player, Coach or Team Personnel with a penalty imposed.
- [b] On-Report: the Referee may place a Player, Coach or Team Personnel “*On-Report*” by signalling an **X** with his arms; wherein the Fourth Official will note (i) the time of the incident and (ii) a brief description upon the game sheet. This procedure automatically triggers an investigation by the NRLA: Judicial Review Panel [“JRP”] of the incident “On-Report” for their consideration.
- [c] Sin Bin [Yellow Card]: the Referee may send a player to the “Sin Bin” for ten [10] minutes. A sin-binned player cannot be replaced until the ten [10] minutes sanction has elapsed and they are permitted to re-enter the field and game, only by authorization of the Referee. Any player receiving three [3] yellow cards within the course of a season, not necessarily in consecutive order/matches, will be automatically suspended for the next match following the third yellow card. Subsequent to the player serving this automatic one [1] match suspension, their effective “Card Count” is reset to a tally of zero [0].
- [d] Send Off [Red Card]: the Referee will send a player from the Playing Area for “Foul Play” or “Misconduct”. Examples of this include, but are not limited to: (i) a (deliberate *or* unintentional) “High Tackle”, where the defending player comes in contact with the head/neck of an attacking player, (ii) Deliberate Foul *or* Dangerous Play, (iii) Verbal Abuse *or* Contact with a Match Official. The issuance of a “Red Card” *does* automatically result in a Player/Personnel being sent from the field of play, and they are not permitted to sit in the “Technical Area” for the remaining duration of the match *or* for the duration of any subsequent suspension. An automatic one [1] match suspension is a statutory effect for the recipient of a Red Card, and subsequent to this one [1] match suspension being served the player’s effective “Card Count” (including any cumulative “Yellow Cards”) will be reset to a tally of zero [0]. Furthermore, within forty-eight [48] hours (following the recorded kick-off time from when the “Red Card” was issued), the Referee will submit a detailed “Incident Report” and account to the MOD: Chairperson (including any preceding & proceeding reactions and/or responses from Players, Coaches or Team Personnel). In turn, the MOD: Chairperson will submit the report to the NRLA: Judicial Review Panel [“JRP”] for their consideration.

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- [e] If any person reasonably believes that any player or official is guilty of misconduct, he or she must immediately inform the NRLA General Manager, unless delegated otherwise in writing, setting out all relevant details of the alleged misconduct.

- [f] The NRLA General Manager shall investigate, or appoint his delegate to investigate, any allegations of misconduct or prejudicial matters. The GM will decide if an incident should be forwarded to the NRLA: Judiciary.

9.3 NRLA Judiciary: First-Instance Organs

- [a] The initial investigation and decision on whether a player should be charged with an on-field misconduct is made by the Judicial Review Panel (“JRP”) as detailed in the subsequent clauses below.

- [b] The JRP is comprised of & administered by: (i) Chairperson – Match Officials Department (“MOD”), (ii) NRLA: Tournament Director (General Manager unless delegated otherwise) (“TD”), and (iii) an Independent Member.

- [c] In all “Judicial Cases” considered, the JRP have following options:
 - Charge the Team, Player, Coach or Team Personnel [henceforth referred to as “Party”] and refer the matter to the Disciplinary Committee.
 - Caution the Party – in which case, subject to the “Right of Appeal” to the Disciplinary Committee, the Caution will be placed on record.
 - Decide there is no case to answer, in which case the JRP may still send the Party a warning/advice letter.
 - Where a Player has been dismissed from the field of play, deem the Referee’s decision to send the player from the field of play sufficient punishment and place this finding on the Player’s NRLA: Record.
 - Refer the matter to the DC for further investigation.

- [d] All decision of the JRP will be logged and published on the NRLA website.

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- [e] In any instance where a Player, Coach, Team Personnel *or* Official is “Under Investigation” *or* “Charged” of Misconduct, they will not be allowed to participate in any Championship fixture and/or National Team service, until the conclusion of their Judicial Case.
- [f] If any person reasonably believes that any Player, Coach, Team Personnel *or* Official is “Guilty of Misconduct”, or wishes to bring any on-/off- field incidents of alleged misconduct to the attention of the JRP, they must *immediately* inform the NRLA: GM in writing (outlining *all* relevant and specific details of the alleged misconduct upon the “NRLA: Petition Form”), no later than forty-eight [48] hours following the recorded kick-off time or incident in question. The NRLA: GM will then forward the written allegation to the NRLA: Judicial Review Panel [“JRP”] without delay, who will review and reach a conclusion within ninety-six [96] hours.

9.4 NRLA Judicial Branch: “DC: Disciplinary Committee”

- [a] The Disciplinary Committee (“DC”) has the authority to approve and homologate the results of the NRLA Championships and to resolve on all disciplinary issues related thereof. In particular, it has authority to investigate and rule on matters pertaining to assaults on the Match Officials (whether verbal, physical or moral), as well as investigating a player’s sanctions, as the case may be. If the DC does not consider that it can reach a decision on the evidence before it, it may ask the JRP for further evidence or dismiss the case.
- [b] The DC shall determine:
- Whether an Offence has been committed;
 - If so, the Grade of the Offence;
 - Where a Party has been found guilty of an Offence, the appropriate sanction, in accordance with the “NRLA Judiciary: Sentencing Guidelines & Procedures” [“JSGP”]. (Third party recommendations (RLIF/RLEF) may be used.)
- [c] The DC is also competent to resolve on all off-field matters related to players actions and/or behaviours that transpire outside of the Playing Area, as well as matters affecting breaches by the teams related to their duties in the NRLA: Championship. The DC may sanction a Team, Player, Coach or Team Personnel to be:
- Excluded from a Championship and/or Fixture,
 - Demoted to a Lower Division,
 - Suspension / Expulsion,
 - Deduct Championship Points, and/or

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- Apply Fines.
- [d] The DC’s proceedings may be initiated by the JRP, or the NRLA General Manager, or by any person designated by the latter to this effect. The JRP are in charge of the investigation of disciplinary matters and may present the case to the DC with the findings and recommendations.
- [e] Any player receiving a suspension in the NRLA Championship will not be permitted to serve out any part of his suspension in the NRLA: Championship, nor the North League/South West League. (For purposes of clarity: each Championship serves as a unique Tournament, with suspensions requiring their term to be served in kind.)
- [f] All decisions of the DC are appealable in accordance with the provisions with these rules, below.

9.5 NRLA Judicial Branch: “AC: Appeals Commission”

- [a] The appeals body may be asked to resolve on matters that have been fully investigated, or on matters that are still subject to investigation.
- [b] The Appeals Commission [“AC”] is defined as:
- The NRLA: Judicial Body to receive, adjudicate and resolve the appeals in relation to decisions, sentences or verdicts rendered by the Disciplinary Committee (“DC”).
 - The AC is to receive, adjudicate and resolve the appeals in connection with the breaches in the game, or to the rules of the NRLA.
 - The AC may be asked to resolve on matters that have been fully investigated, or on matters that are still subject to investigation. The same rules of proceedings mentioned for the DC shall apply for the AC, except that the Appeals Body shall not be bound by the time frame to reach decisions.
- [c] An award rendered by the Disciplinary Committee [“DC”] may be subject to an appeal to be lodged by either:
- the Party sanctioned by the DC
 - the President of the Club(s) / Team(s) concerned by the matter
 - the NRLA General Manager and NRLA Director of Rugby or Legal Advisor, jointly signed
- [d] The delay of the appeal is fifteen (15) days, starting from the next day of the date of the award. The appeal is subject to the payment of a non-refundable fee of 50 Naira (\$50).

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- [e] Unless otherwise decided by the Appeals Body, the appeal shall serve to suspend the effect of the DC's award.
- [f] Upon the receipt of a request for appeal, the AC shall proceed with the notification of all the other parties involved in the DC proceedings. The notification shall contain the reference to the delay within which the notified Parties will have to submit their observations to the appeals body.
- [g] The appeals award shall be published and rendered public. It shall be final and binding, and cannot be subject to any form of contestation.

10.0 MISCONDUCT OFFENSE

10.1 Inducements

It shall be an offense for any player, coach, club official or match official offering or receiving a bonus or any form of inducement to or from any other player, coach, official or referee whether directly or indirectly and by whatever means to win, lose or draw a match or alter or influence their decision in a match may be deemed guilty of misconduct and may be dealt with as provided above.

10.2 Betting

It shall be an offense for any player, club official, coach or match official to place, accept or lay a bet on any NRLA match or tournament, or in relation to NRLA matches or tournaments in any way, or to provide information or do any other act or thing which is calculated to or does assist other involved on any of the foregoing.

10.3 Criticism of Match Officials

It shall be an offense for any player, coach or club official to publish, or cause to be published or make public (by whatsoever medium), comments that are prejudice or derogative of NRLA Match Officials, or the manner in which a Match Official has conducted their duties.

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10.4 Discrimination

It shall be an offense for any player, coach or club official to engage in discrimination on the grounds of age, ethnic origin, gender, and special needs, including learning and physical disabilities, class or social background, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, pregnancy, color or political persuasion (Discriminatory Behavior).

10.5 Gestures & Foul Language

It shall be an offense for any player, coach or club official to make any gesture, or use foul and/or abusive language, that may be considered obscene or likely to incite disorder.

10.6 Unruly Behavior

It shall be an offense for any player, coach or club official to behave in an unruly manner in any public place, which for the avoidance of doubt shall include to- and from- Championship venues, within team transportation, and in vicinity of playing areas.

10.7 Conduct Prejudicial to the Interest of the NRLA

It shall be an offense for any Player, Coach, Personnel, NRLA Official or Officer to behave in a manner which is prejudicial to the interests of the NRLA or which may cause damage, annoyance or disrepute to the NRLA or the Game of Rugby League Football.

10.8 Safety

It shall be an offense for any Player, Coach, Personnel, NRLA Official or Officer to fail to comply with safety instructions provided by the recognized Team Representative and/or person of authority responsible for safety & wellbeing of the venue.

10.9 Spectators

Participating clubs shall use their best endeavors to ensure that their supporters and spectators attending any NRLA official event, and in respect of local residences, do not use foul and abusive language or threatening

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gestures towards players or members of team management, match officials, tournament officials, other supporters and members of the public.

10.10 On-Field Discipline

All participating teams shall and shall procure that their players and officials shall agree to abide by the disciplinary provisions of the NRLA set out in the NRLA Judiciary: Sentencing Guidelines and Procedures.

10.11 Code of Conduct

It shall be an offense for any Player, Coach, Personnel, NRLA Official or Officer who is in breach of the NRLA “code of conduct”.

11.0 MEDIA RELATIONS

It is imperative for the success of the Championship that all players, coaches and officials make themselves available to the media at all times. In particular there will be the following requirements:

11.1 Team Photograph

The NRLA requires all clubs to provide team photos, and ensure that the full squad and all club officials are available for a formal team photograph at each fixture.

11.2 NRLA Championship Final: Pre-Match Press Conference

Prior to the Championship Final, participating teams’ full squads must be available to meet for a pre-match Press Conference, *if* and *as* and *when* required, as specified by the organization/entity hosting the fixture. The Manager, Coach and Captain must be available for a short formal press conference if requested by the NRLA.

11.3 Weekly Press Briefings

Each club’s representative, team manager or coach shall liaise with the appointed media officers each week to discuss potential news stories to be released to the media.

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11.4 Pre-Match Venue Training or Familiarization Visit

These visits will be open to the media, and all players and officials should make themselves available for informal interviews after the training session or familiarization visit.

11.5 Post-Match Press Conference

Each club's representative, Coach and Captain must be available for a short formal press conference after each match, together with the Man of the Match or any other nominated player, if requested by the NRLA or host team.

11.6 Official Spokesman

Each club must provide one official as the team's Official Spokesman. The Official Spokesman must be available for emergency and press contact on their mobile phone between the hours of 08:00 and 21:00 each day.

11.7 Telephone Access

Each team shall co-operate with media requests for telephone interviews from radio stations.

12.0 PLAYERS' ELIGIBILITY

12.1 Player Registration

- (a) All players wishing to participate in the NRLA Championship must be registered with- and by- the NRLA.
- (b) A non-refundable, annual registration fee of forty Naira (\$40), made payable to the Nigeria Rugby League Association (NRLA), must accompany each completed player registration form.
- (c) No player is registered until ratified by the NRLA.
- (d) The NRLA can deregister a player any time it so chooses and without prior notice.

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- (e) All players under 18 years must provide a duly signed statutory document from parents approving and allowing them to play and waiving all rights.
- (f) New player registration, during the season, can be submitted and received by the NRLA Tournament Director before 12:00pm (noon) on the Thursday before a fixture they wish to participate in.
- (g) Player Release:
 - (i) If a player wishes to play for a club other than the club with which he is currently registered, he should receive a written release from his present club (NRLA Player Release Form)⁵ allowing them to play for another club.
 - (ii) A copy of the signed and authorized Release Form, along with the Transfer Fee of two hundred Naira (\$200), must be sent to, and acknowledged by the NRLA Tournament Director/General Manager,
 - (iii) Clubs are expected to respect the moral wellbeing of players.
- (h) All registrations are valid for one (1) season and expire on 30th June 2018. [NB: Exceptions may include multiple year Player Contracts; subject to review and ratification by the NRLA Tournament Director.]
- (i) All Clubs will be given 60 days from the end of the season – in this case until Wednesday, 8th July 2017 – to re-sign their players to a new registration contracts. Other teams are prohibited from talking to players that were registered at other clubs during the last 2019 NRLA Championship until Thursday, 9th July 2018; after which any player who has not signed a registration form for a club is permitted to sign with any team in the 2019-20 NRLA Championship.

12.2 Playoff & Championship Final Eligibility

In order for Players to be considered eligible for the Playoffs, they must:

- (a) Adhere to all NRLA Rules and Regulations,

⁵ The NRLA Player Release Form, must be duly signed by: (1) Club President and/or Vice-President, *and* (2) Club General-Secretary.

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- (b) Have been recorded in a minimum of four (4) games in their respective club's rosters from the NRLA: 2018 Premiership.
- (c) Failure to meet these requirements will infer an ineligibility status in respect to that player's ability to participate in their club's NRLA Playoff match or Championship Final.
- (d) A breach by a player in these eligibility requirements will incur a forfeit for the club found guilty.

**ALL CLUBS MUST HONOR THE SPIRIT OF
THE NRLA RULES & REGULATIONS**

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Appendix I: RUGBY LEAGUE FOOTBALL – FIELD DIMENSIONS

RUGBY LEAGUE PITCH

