



**ENGLISH CLUBS CHAMPIONSHIP
SOUTH WEST LEAGUES
SEASON 2021-22 – NEWSLETTER 1 – MAY 2021**
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Fixtures

It has been a long time coming but the fixtures for Season 2021-2022 are out!

If you want a complete set of fixtures for the South West they can be downloaded from the SW website or you can download just a single league. As in past years clubs may mutually agree to move fixtures. The deadline is the 18th June and applications should be made via the SW website. Confirmation they have been agreed will appear on the RFU website in due course.

With the exception of those in 13/14 Club Leagues clubs will be able to nominate one non-league weekend when they will not be available for re-arranged matches. These nominations must be made directly on line, giving a minimum of eight weeks' notice. (In the event eight weeks' notice is not given such nomination will automatically be ineffective). **All weekends during the season (INCLUDING EASTER SATURDAY but excluding Christmas (see below)) are deemed to be available – so do not wait until you have a game postponed before nominating an unavailable weekend. If you have a tour booked already – close the date now!** Naturally clubs will not be ordered to play any re-arranged games on the 25th December 2021 or 1st January 2022 so there is no need to declare those dates as unavailable. You cannot nominate any date on which a re-arranged game has already been scheduled – even if it is within the eight weeks.

Please take note of this as each year clubs fail to pay heed to the fact that, with the exception of the Christmas/New Year dates, there are NO free weekends between September and May unless you apply for one.

The structured season, which is available on the website, has been altered this season to give space for county cup competitions in September. In anticipation of the restructure of the competition in 2022-2023, there will be no play-offs this year.

Clubs who, as direct consequence of the Covid 19 pandemic, feel they are unable to compete at their current Level should as a matter of urgency, and by no later than 31st May, contact their League Secretary.

Competition re-organisation

Plans are being formulated for the restructuring of the national league structure to come into effect in September 2022. Further details will be released during the summer.

Confirmation of Nominated League Contacts

Each year we ask clubs to confirm or update their nominated league contact (NLC). Now the new league make ups are confirmed we can start the process for next season. Please go to www.swrugby.co.uk/nlcconfirm and follow the instructions there – this must be done by 1st July and applies to all clubs even if you have updated your details in the last few weeks prior to the publication of this newsletter.

League Secretaries

There have been some changes to League Secretaries. Up to date details are on the website.

Registrations

Clubs are able to register players for next season now. Please remember all players need to complete and sign a paper form before you either process it on line or submit it to the Admin Office. The only players which cannot be registered yet are those on a Student or Services pass. These apply on a seasonal basis and cannot be processed before the 1st August 2021.

Two important things to note. Due to the long lay-off Under 18s may not play adult rugby – in any position – before 1st January 2022. This is down to player safety as most will not have played the full contact game since they were possibly 15 years old.

The other issue concerns foreign and overseas players. Notwithstanding the country's exit from the European Community, the RFU has decided for the coming season that the existing arrangements for registering players born overseas will continue.

SW Website

We will continue to provide updates via the website (www.swrugby.co.uk) and Twitter. We will also continue to issue newsletters as appropriate. If you have any queries you are welcome to contact your league secretary or the Admin Office, but please check the website first to see if the answer you require is there.

RFU Cup Competitions

The RFU has announced the National Knockout Competitions will NOT be staged this season. This is to give maximum priority to the league season should we suffer disruption during the winter.

Some constituent bodies may decide to run a competition and you should contact yours to see if there is one for you.

Regulations – 2021-2022

The regulations for the coming season are being finalised and will be posted on englandrugby.com when they come into effect on 1st August 2021. For clubs playing in the SW Deregulated Leagues, your regulations will be posted on the SW website once they have been approved by the RFU.

Clubs are advised that the RFU is in the process of strengthening the regulations and sanctions applicable to 'non-fulfilment' of fixtures as currently set out in Regulation 13. Full details will be available before the start of the 21/22 season.