



**WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE
RUGBY**

*2019
LEAGUE AGREEMENT*

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

I. INTRODUCTION	4
II. PURPOSE	4
III. LEAGUE AGREEMENT	4
A. Participating Clubs	4
B. League Season	5
C. Match Schedule	5
D. National Championship	9
E. Seeding	9
F. Points System	9
G. Standings	10
H. Referees	10
I. Assistant Referees	11
J. Match field standards	11
K. Medical Personnel and Procedures	12
L. Severe Weather Policy	13
M. League Administrative Fees and Financial Policies & Procedures	13
N. Regular Season Match Reporting Responsibilities	14
O. Match Video Sharing	15
P. Sponsorship and Marketing	16
Q. Governing Council	16
R. Discipline	18
S. Grievances	18
T. Annual Meeting	18
IV. SIGNATURES	21
V. APPENDIX	24
APPENDIX I: 2019 MATCH SCHEDULE	24
APPENDIX II: LEAGUE MATCH REPORT	25
APPENDIX III: LEAGUE HOSTING GUIDELINES	26
APPENDIX IV: WPL DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES	27
APPENDIX V: LEAGUE PROMOTION/RELEGATION POLICY	29
APPENDIX VI: 2019 PROMOTION/RELEGATION CALENDAR	33
APPENDIX VII: PROMOTION/RELEGATION – PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT	34
APPENDIX VIII: HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR PROMOTION/RELEGATION	35

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT**I. INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this document is to establish the basic ground rules to be agreed upon and followed by the ten women's rugby clubs participating in the Women's Premier League in 2019 and by USA Rugby. This is the final version. It has been reviewed and revised based on input from the participating clubs and other stakeholders. This agreement operates in conjunction with the Memorandum of Understanding between the WPL and USAR, attached separately.

II. PURPOSE

The creation of the Women's Premiership League serves the following goals:

1. Increase the number of highest quality competitive matches played by women's club teams in the United States
2. Provide a competitive structure that offers incentive to clubs to perform well throughout the course of an entire season, as well as at the National Championships
3. Encourage teams in all Divisions to consistently perform at a higher level of play by demonstrating competitive excellence, and meeting set requirements and expectations, as well as creating a mechanism for promotion to a higher league, D2 to D1 and D1 to Premiership, as appropriate
4. Support the growth and sustainability of each member club, with an ideal of a strong, long-lasting club with well-organized administration, a consistent and competitive second side and a successful youth program
5. Honor a key tradition among women's rugby clubs that every player who is interested is welcome, regardless of skill level or athletic potential
6. Promote the development of all players
7. Support the development of the women's game by using National Panel referees for League matches and the National Championship
8. Achieve these goals without significantly increasing the amount of money teams and players are already spending to compete

III. LEAGUE AGREEMENT**A. Participating Clubs**

1. The Women's Premier League (WPL) will be comprised of 10 of the top senior women's clubs, competing in 2 Conferences. The 10 clubs for 2019 will be: Atlanta Harlequins, Berkeley All Blues, Chicago North Shore, Beantown Rugby, Glendale Raptors, New York Rugby Club, Oregon Sports Union (ORSU), San Diego Surfers, Twin City Amazons, and Life West Gladiatrix.
2. The WPL Promotion/Relegation Policy was originally determined by a sub-committee in 2010 and ratified for a two year period at the 2010 League Annual Meeting. Following the 2012 season, the policy was not renewed and subsequent annual assessments were considered for reinstatement. At the 2017 League Annual Meeting, it was determined to reinstate Promotion/Relegation as detailed in Appendix V-IV. Per League Membership

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

vote in 2017, this policy will be automatically suspended for a period of no less than one year following any significant structural changes to the League.

3. The ultimate goal for the league is to push the standard of play ever higher and to expand as additional clubs reach competitive parity at that standard and are able to meet the competitive, financial, and historical sustainability and consistency requirements of competing in the WPL while not diminishing the integrity of the USA DI competition. The 2016 League Annual Meeting confirmed that the criteria for expansion had been met and two additional teams joined the League in 2017 to expand to 10 teams.

B. League Season

1. The competitive season will begin in late August to early September and the National Championship will be held in late October to early November of each year.
2. The 2019 season will be separate from the DI and DII Women's Club season. The WPL championship will be held November 1 and 3, 2019 in Glendale, Colorado.

C. Match Schedule

1. The match schedule will be set by the League Commissioner each year, following the conclusion of the National Championship & prior to April 1st of the following calendar year. Every effort will be made to ensure parity in home and travel weekends.
2. Each team will play eight regular season matches, a home and away series against the four opponents in their Conference. Clubs may arrange their own pre-season matches and may fill any off weekends during the season as they wish.
3. Each team must declare a match roster of up to 23 players by 11:59pm on Friday night prior to kick-off of each regular season match through the Competitions Management System (CMS). A maximum of 23 players may be played in any single match, as per the substitution regulations implemented by the IRB and adopted by USA Rugby in 2009.
4. The schedule will accommodate the WNT calendar to the greatest extent possible, to avoid having any clubs lose key players to a WNT event during the League season. However, in some years, some overlap may be unavoidable, especially during World Cup years.
5. The 2019 match schedule is included in Appendix I.
6. Matches will be scheduled for Sundays, to allow clubs to travel on Saturday instead of Friday (no missed work in case of cross-country flights), to increase the likelihood that referees of the appropriate quality will be available for League matches, and to minimize accommodation nights (one instead of two) and their associated cost. Either the Home or Away club may request to hold matches on Saturday of the designated weekend. Any change in game days must be agreed to by both teams and submitted to the Competition Director by May 1, 2019.
7. Clubs are strongly encouraged to schedule B-side matches against each other in conjunction with scheduled League matches.
 - a. If the traveling club wants to travel with their B-side, they should alert the home team through the use of the WPL Master Document GoogleDoc as far in advance as possible, but no less than 2 months in advance.
 - b. The home team must commit to a good faith effort to provide the highest quality

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- B-side match possible, ideally from within the club's own roster, or, if necessary, with another local club team.
- c. College teams are not considered appropriate quality for B-side matches unless both sides agree in advance.
 - d. No club traveling to play a League match is required to bring a B-side.
8. Clubs are discouraged from playing athletes in multiple, full-length matches per weekend, as this practice significantly decreases the quality of play and increases the chances of injury due to fatigue.
 9. Clubs are encouraged to use the pre-season and open weekends to schedule matches with local opponents that desire to continue to compete against them, especially top D1 clubs. The Premiership aims to support the growth and development of any club wishing to improve its level of play.
 10. In the event that the time and/or location of a regularly scheduled league match is threatened less than 24 hours prior to kick off by circumstances beyond the control of the home team, the following policy applies:
 - a. Circumstances beyond the control of the home team include but are not limited to events such as field closure due to extreme weather, official transportation grid closures by transportation officials, etc.
 - b. Home teams have until 90 minutes prior to the originally scheduled match time to present an alternate time/location for holding the match on the same day, and as close to the same time and location as possible. Until that time, visiting teams are obligated to be ready to compete as planned.
 - c. If an alternate solution has not been presented by the home team by 90 minutes before the originally scheduled match time, the visiting team has the OPTION of requesting that the match be rescheduled for an alternate date. If the home team has presented an alternate option within 90 minutes but the new location or game time is substantially different than the original and is not a viable option for the visiting team due to pre-existing flights, the visiting team has the OPTION of requesting the match be rescheduled for an alternate date. However, both teams are strongly urged to continue to work cooperatively toward finding a solution to play the match on the originally scheduled date, recognizing that the situation is not optimal for either team but that the priority is to play the match. Please note, that to have the flexibility for weather delays, visiting teams should not schedule flights for at least three hours after the originally planned end time of the game (90 minutes after the kickoff time).
 - d. If the match is unable to be played on the originally scheduled date, best efforts must be made by both teams to schedule an alternate date for the match. The home team will retain primary responsibility for hosting the match, however, it is up to the discretion of the two teams to make other mutually agreed upon arrangements.
 - e. If a rescheduled match has not been completed by the last Sunday prior to the WPL Championships, the Governing Council will declare the match a Tie and will award each team 2 match points, as per the rules of the competition.
 - f. All communication in this situation should follow these standards, on a cooperative and best efforts basis:

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- i. Provide information to the other team as soon as it is available.
 - ii. Communicate across multiple channels (email, text and cell) to multiple people on the other end until an agreed upon communication policy is established.
 - iii. The mutually agreed communication policy should include at least 2 people from each team, to ensure redundancy and avoid lost information, and should require acknowledgement of all messages, to avoid any potential confusion.
 - iv. Both teams should notify the Competition Director (CD) at the outset of the situation and update the CD as appropriate. The CD will not participate in the process until and unless the game is unable to be played on the originally scheduled day.
 - v. If the game is unable to be played on the originally scheduled day, the CD will check in with the teams to ensure that the next steps listed in the policy above are being followed.
 - vi. The home team must inform the referee and ARs as soon as any complication regarding match time and/or location arises and must keep the referee informed of current status.
 - g. In the event the match is cancelled the CD will notify the Referee Manager (RM) and connect the RM with the two teams. The Referee Manager will work with the two teams during discussions to reschedule the match in order to assign -- on a best-efforts basis -- a WPL Referee Pool official for the make-up match.
 - h. In the event that a regular WPL referee is not available or cannot be scheduled in the time available, the Referee Manager will work to assign the highest-level referee possible.
11. In the event that a visiting team is prevented from traveling to a regularly scheduled match less than 24 hours before kickoff due to circumstances beyond the control of the visiting team, the following policy applies:
- a. Circumstances beyond the control of the visiting team include ONLY weather related travel restrictions (limited to flights officially cancelled by carriers, highways closed by transportation officials, etc.) and natural disasters and other events of similar magnitude.
 - b. If at least 15 visiting players are at the pitch by the scheduled match time, the game must kickoff, unless mutually agreed by the teams.
 - c. If 15 visiting players are not at the pitch by the scheduled match time due to one of the circumstances listed above, the visiting team has the OPTION of requesting that the match be rescheduled for an alternate date. However, both teams are strongly urged to continue to work cooperatively toward finding a solution to play the match on the originally scheduled date, recognizing that the situation is not optimal for either team but that the priority is to play the match.
 - d. If the match is unable to be played on the originally scheduled date, best efforts must be made by both teams to schedule an alternate date for the match. The home team will retain primary responsibility for hosting the match, however, it is up to the discretion of the two teams to make other mutually agreed upon arrangements.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- e. If a rescheduled match has not been completed by the last Sunday prior to the WPL Championships, the CD will declare the match a Tie and will award each team 2 match points, as per the rules of the competition.
 - f. All communication in this situation should follow these standards, on a cooperative and best efforts basis:
 - i. Provide information to the other team as soon as it is available.
 - ii. Communicate across multiple channels (email, text and cell) to multiple people on the other end until an agreed upon communication policy is established.
 - iii. The mutually agreed communication policy should include at least 2 people from each team, to ensure redundancy and avoid lost information, and should require acknowledgement of all messages, to avoid any potential confusion.
 - iv. Both teams should notify the CD at the outset of the situation and update the CD as appropriate. The CD will not participate in the process until and unless the game is unable to be played on the originally scheduled day.
 - v. If the game is unable to be played on the originally scheduled day, the CD will check in with the teams to ensure that the next steps listed in the policy above are being followed.
 - vi. The home team must inform the referee and ARs as soon as any complication regarding match time and/or location arises and must keep the referee informed of current status.
 - g. In the event the match is cancelled the CD will notify the Referee Manager (RM) and connect the RM with the two teams. The Referee Manager will work with the two teams during discussions to reschedule the match in order to assign -- on a best-efforts basis -- a WPL Referee Pool official for the make-up match.
 - h. In the event that a regular WPL referee is not available or cannot be scheduled in the time available, the Referee Manager will work to assign the highest-level referee possible.
12. Changes or potential changes to the match time and/or location beyond the control of the home team that occur more than 24 hours prior to kickoff are expected to be resolved with sufficient time to make reasonable alternate location and/or time adjustments, and include the following requirements:
- a. Home teams are required to inform visiting teams and referees of these changes, or of the possibility of change, at the earliest time the information is known, and to confirm that the visiting team and referees are able to meet reasonable alternate time and/or location arrangements.
 - b. Visiting teams are required to respond to home teams and confirm ability to meet reasonable alternate time and/or location arrangements.
 - c. Both teams are required to make every effort to compromise as appropriate to allow the match to take place on the originally scheduled date and as reasonably close to the original location and kickoff time as possible.

D. National Championship

- 1. The conclusion to the season will be a single National Championship weekend, with each

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

team playing two matches over three days.

2. Player eligibility for Championships are determined by the USAR Eligibility Committee as detailed at <https://www.usarugby.org/eligibility/>. Teams are responsible for assuring that CMS match reports throughout the season are accurate in order to determine eligibility for participation.
3. Teams will be seeded within their conference based on the results of the regular season matches (see below), with the first and second seeded teams from each conference (Red and Blue) competing for the Cup and the bottom three teams from each conference competing for the Bowl.
 - Cup Semifinals:
 - Red 1 vs Blue 2
 - Blue 1 vs Red 2
 - Winners play for the Cup and losers for the Plate
 - Bowl Semifinals:
 - G1: Red-3 v Blue-3
 - G2: Blue-5 v Red-4
 - G3: Red-5 v Blue-4

 - G4: Winner G1 v Winner G2/3 (Biggest PD) - 5th place
 - G5: Loser G1 v Winner G2/3 (Smaller PD) - 7th place
 - G6: Loser G2 v Loser G3 - 9th place
4. USA Rugby will administer the National Championship with the WPL Commissioner serving as tournament commissioner unless otherwise agreed upon with USAR.

E. Conference Structure

1. The League structure for the 2019 competitive season in the following manner: The Red (East) conference will consist of New York Rugby Club, Chicago North Shore, Atlanta Harlequins, Beantown, and Twin City Amazons; The Blue (West) Conference will consist of ORSU, Berkeley All Blues, San Diego Surfers, Life West, and Glendale Raptors. This structure will be revisited each year until a long-term structure is successfully voted on.
2. Regular season match play will determine the seeding heading into the Championship weekend (see Points System below). Therefore, every match counts and every match has an impact on whether a club will compete for the Cup or the Bowl during the Championship weekend. Reaching the Cup bracket in the Championship will require clubs to play at a consistently high level throughout the season. Every game should require the athletes to perform under pressure and thus assist athlete development across the board.

F. Points System

1. Points will be awarded following each regular season match:
 - a. Win = 4 points
 - b. Tie = 2 points

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- c. Loss = 0 points
 - d. Score 4 or more tries in a match = 1 bonus point
 - e. Lose but score within 7 points = 1 bonus point
2. Ties in the standings will be broken in the following order:
 - a. Win-Loss record in the two head-to-head matches
 - b. Best point differential (Points For less Points Against)
 - c. Best try differential (Tries For less Tries Against)
 - d. Most points scored
 - e. Most tries scored
 - f. Toss of a coin.

G. Standings

1. The match schedule, results & current points standing will be posted on the USA Rugby website (usarugby.org) and WPL website (wplrugby.com).
2. Any disputes regarding the standings will be referred to the Governing Council (see below).

H. Referees

1. Referees for every League match and for the National Championship will be coordinated and assigned by the Referee Manager.
2. To the extent possible, the level of referee provided will be no less than National Panel, Directors Panel or National Focus Group. Starting with the 2018 Season, a joint coordination between the High Performance Referee Program and the WPL will determine a pool of referees to officiate all regular season and Championship games each season. The selections for the WPL Championships to be derived from referee evaluations throughout the regular season.
 - a. During the Spring, team representatives, the WPL Competitions Director, and Commissioner, and Referee Manager will work together to create a competition document that outlines the “product” that teams, coaches, administrators and match officials would like to produce for Fall competition and culminate in a list of focus areas for game management.
 - b. Once Focus Areas are determined, the Referee Manager will compile a pool of referees, no less than seven, to be reviewed by the WPL stakeholders. After review, this pool of WPL specific referees will allow for a compact group to drive a more consistent product and allow flexibility regarding availability. This will allow each referee a greater number of games in the season and, where possible, to work with a greater number of teams.
 - c. In addition, during the season, the WPL referee pool will work with referee coaches that work with the referees, and set up a weekly call to ensure that the group, are accountable and in line with the agreed upon Focus Areas.
3. To balance the prioritization of the highest level of referees and concern for frugality, the Referee Manager will work to book flights as far in advance as possible and National Panel referees will be assigned within their geographical region as much as possible.
4. Referee costs (travel and agreed upon stipend) for the regular season will be paid out of

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

the League account. The cost of referees for National Championships will be covered by USAR.

5. Referees will receive two formal performance reviews in an online review system supplied by World Rugby.
6. In 2012, the WPL purchased 5 radios to capture the referee soundtrack on every WPL match video. This will enable remote referee evaluators to assess every referee performance provided all match videos meet the League video standard (Appendix IX). Radios on referees fed into game tape will no longer be required as of 2018, but is still strongly encouraged.
7. In addition, there is a strong encouragement for radios to be provided for communication between the match official and assistant referees.

I. Assistant Referees

1. The home team is responsible for ensuring that there are qualified Assistant Referees for the game at least three weeks in advance of the game.
2. If any union provides free AR's or if the home team opts to pay for AR's, the home team must use those AR's. The home team agrees to make every effort to secure ARs who are not currently active affiliated members of their club.
3. Only in cases where every effort has been made to secure a qualified Assistant Referee has been unsuccessful, may a touch judge be an appropriate solution.
 - a. The home team must ask the visiting team if they have a qualified touch judge. A qualified touch judge is someone who is either a certified referee or touch judge.
 - b. If the visiting team doesn't have a qualified touch judge and the home team does, the home team may use both of their qualified touch judges.
 - c. If the home team doesn't have two qualified touch judges, then the home team must allow the visiting team to supply someone who has experience touch judging.
 - d. If the visiting team doesn't have anyone with experience touch judging, then the home team is responsible for supplying both touch judges.
4. If there is a complaint about one or both AR's following a match, the complaint should be noted in the appropriate place on the existing Referee Evaluation Form and the complaint should also be mentioned to the local referee society and WPL Competitions Director.

J. Match field standards

1. Field specifications: each member team shall make a good faith effort to provide a field with the following aspirational dimensions:
 - a. Length (goal-to-goal): not less than 91m (99.5 yards) and not exceeding 100m (109.4 yards).
 - b. Width: not less than 59m (64.5 yards) and not exceeding 70m (76.6 yards).
 - c. In goal: not less than 8m (8.7 yards) and not exceeding 22m (24.1 yards).
 - d. '22m line' will be 22m (24.1 yards) from the goal line.
 - e. '10m line' will be 10m (10.9 yards) from the mid-way line.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- f. '5m from touch' will be 5m (5.5 yards) from the touchline.
 - g. '15m from touch' will be 15m (16.4 yards) from the touchline.
 - h. '5m from goal' will be 5m (5.5 yards) from the goal line.
 - i. Flat and level
 - j. Clearly painted lines as per detailed above.
2. All teams should declare their Home field by July 1, 2019. This information should be added to the WPL Master Document GoogleDoc as well as the CMS and should include any specific information about the pitch, such as the surface (grass or turf) and any restrictions (e.g. no metal studs allowed).
 3. If a visiting team strongly prefers a field closer to the aspirational dimensions and is willing to sacrifice hosting or other amenities, they can request that the home team look for other fields. Home teams must make a best effort to find alternative fields that meet or are closer to aspirational dimensions. There is no obligation on teams to get a different field if they cannot.
 4. Field quality
 - a. Hosting and visiting team will have a representative walk the pitch no later than 60 minutes before each match to examine the pitch (visiting team may decline the walk and accept the pitch as is). If there is an issue with quality, the home team must make best effort to accommodate visiting team. If there is a disagreement, the referee has the final say in whether the game goes forward.
 - b. Sample standards: no unprotected metal grates, holes or sharp objects, etc.
 5. Home teams are required to follow and enforce USAR technical zones and sideline guidelines.
 6. Field Restraints: there must be restraining ropes or permanent fixture three meters back from the touch line.
 - a. Only rostered subs, coaches, medical personnel, and two official water people can be within the rope and the touch line.
 - b. Those people must be in pinnies or similar (distinct from team jerseys) and must respect the AR and stand as close to the restraining ropes as possible.
 7. USA Rugby is requested to make every effort to secure fields that meet these WPL size and quality standards for the National Championships.

K. Medical Personnel and Procedures

1. Each member club MUST have qualified medical personnel at every home game.
2. Qualified medical personnel
 - a. ATC certification is required, there are no exceptions. Additional qualified medical personnel may also be present, but the home team MUST provide one Certified Athletic Trainer at each WPL match.
 - b. Duties
 - i. Taping and injury prevention to both teams before the match
 - ii. Free access to players on the pitch during play if there is an injury
 - iii. Final say in whether the player goes to the hospital
 - iv. Players must supply their own tape.
 - c. Process
 - i. Home team should introduce trainer to visiting team as soon as trainer is

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- available for pregame consultation
 - ii. Home team should introduce trainer to referee so no confusion as to who can come on the field during injuries.
 - d. Must be at the pitch 1.5 hours before kick off and available for the tapping needs of both teams.
3. Hospital Access
 - a. If there is a visiting team player that needs to go to the hospital but not emergency enough for an ambulance, the home team should make their best effort to get the player to the hospital.
 4. Home teams must provide a sufficient quantity of ice and ice bags for the use of both teams.
 5. Each team is recommended to have a binder with insurance and ID card photocopies that is taken to all home and away games in case of injury.

L. Severe Weather Policy

1. The referee will decide whether and when to call the match due to dangerous weather conditions.
2. If the game is called for weather prior to kickoff, the teams will be assigned a tie score of 0 to 0.
3. If the game is called before halftime, the teams will be assigned a tie but the tie score will be the higher of the 2 scores when the game is called. For example, at the 30-minute mark Team A has 10 points and Team B has 20 points. The game is called for inclement weather, both teams are assigned a score of 20 points and the game listed as a tie.
4. If the game is called after halftime, the score at the time the game is called will stand.

M. League Administrative Fees and Financial Policies & Procedures

1. Each member club will pay a fixed \$2,000 League Fee to the League, to cover League expenses.
2. The total fee must be paid in full by July 31, 2019, prior to the first League match, giving member clubs at least nine months between seasons to raise the funds.
 - a. If requested, the Membership Director will send an invoice to each team by July 15, 2019.
 - b. Payment instructions will be provided to the teams prior to July 1, 2019.
 - c. Late payment of the League Fee will result in a late fee of \$50 per day to be assessed by the Governing Council.
3. For financial activity from 2009 to 2017, USA Rugby will maintain a full and proper accounting of all income and expenses attributed to the WPL. From 2017 onward, the League will maintain an account separate from USAR for prior year surpluses and proceeds and expenses for other revenue generating activities. The Governing Council will maintain records of financial activities with documentation of expenses paid available upon request from any member team.
4. Starting in 2018, approved League expenses will be paid out of the WPL account, overseen by the League's Governing Council.
5. Approved League expenses will include, but not be limited to:

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- a. All referee expenses related to WPL matches
 - b. Administrative costs
 - c. Expenses related to the Annual Meeting
 - d. A \$75/match stipend to the Home team to assist with hire of a videographer to film the match in accordance with the WPL Match Video Protocol
 - e. Governing Council stipends
6. The league membership will determine use of funds remaining following the payment of all approved League expenses. Following the meeting, the process will be managed by the Governing Council and reported to all member teams. Any significant (more than \$2000) non-operating expense will be brought to the league membership for approval.
 7. Governing Council will analyze the League's actual travel cost data and use the findings to make recommended changes to the current fee agreement. The ultimate goal is for all clubs to incur approximately equal travel expense.
 8. Clubs are required to fill in the online League Travel Expense report as detailed by the Membership Director. At minimum, clubs will submit transportation costs (flight, car rental, or gas costs) for 25 people (23 athletes and 2 staff) during the regular season and 30 (28 athletes and 2 staff) for Nationals.
 9. Clubs are encouraged to host each other in order to reduce accommodation costs throughout the season. Clubs that host must follow the League Hosting Guidelines (see Appendix III), which aim to ensure that athletes are provided with sleeping arrangements suitable to the level of the match they are playing the next day (e.g. not on a hard floor with loud music playing all night). Traveling clubs are requested to make every effort to arrive between 4pm and 10pm and to depart 8am or later.

N. Regular Season Match Reporting Responsibilities

1. Home teams are responsible for:
 - a. Enter match roster into the CMS, no later than 11:59pm, Friday night before the match.
 - b. Providing a physical roster of up to 23 to visiting team 30 minutes before the match
 - c. Videotaping the match and uploading a copy by 11:59pm local time on the Tuesday immediately following a WPL match weekend. Teams posting match video beyond that deadline will face a \$50 per day fine imposed by the Governing Council.
 - d. Ensuring that all four forms that make up the League Match Report (see Appendix II) are filled out and signed, verifying the rosters and the score.
 - e. Providing a #4 Match Official to fill out Match Report during match.
 - f. All match report information must be filled out in the CMS within 24 hours of completion of the match.
 - g. Photos of all sections of the League Match Report should be photographed and emailed to the Competitions Director (currently Carly Harrington, asinsimon@gmail.com) and USAR communications immediately following the game.
 - h. The home team is required to scan and upload to the Google Drive all four sections of the League Match Report, fully completed and signed, to the

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- Competitions Director within 24 hours of completion of the match to facilitate nationals roster approval.
- i. Please also email any relevant photos to WPL Marketing Director..
 - j. Retaining all original League Match Reports in case of future discrepancies
2. Traveling teams are responsible for:
 - a. Enter match roster into the CMS, no later than 11:59pm, Friday night before the match.
 - b. Providing a physical roster of up to 23 to the home team 30 minutes before the match
 - c. Verifying and signing the League Match Report that has been filled out by the home team
 - d. Review and validate to the Competitions Director what was entered into the Competitions Management System by the home team by the end of the week following the match.
 3. Refer to the more detailed Match Documents and Procedures document provided by the Competitions Director (no later than August 1, 2019) for further game-day requirements for both Home and Visiting teams.
 4. USA Rugby will be responsible for:
 - a. Ensuring that the CMS is functioning and providing training to each member club on how to use.
 - b. Ensuring that the video hosting site account is paid for and functioning, to enable the required League video sharing policies to proceed
 - c. Filing every League Match Report for the permanent record and in case of later grievances
 - d. Updating the League results and standings table on the USA Rugby website and/or the WPL website every Monday during the League season

O. Match Video Sharing

1. Home teams are responsible for videotaping the WPL match and uploading a copy to YouTube by 11:59pm local time on the Tuesday immediately following a WPL match weekend. Teams posting match video beyond that deadline will face a \$50 per day fine imposed by the Membership Director (MD). In addition, the home team must provide match video to the Referee Manager as soon as possible (and no later than midnight of the Sunday of the game played).
2. Home teams must follow the WPL Match Video Protocol included in Appendix IX.
3. Every member club is required to submit a test video at least one week prior to the start of the WPL regular season, to ensure that potential technical barriers to timely video submission have been addressed prior to the start of the season.
4. To ensure the test uploads are completed prior to the start of the WPL season, the MD will not permit any match videos to be posted until all teams have successfully completed the test upload.
5. Upon the successful test upload from every team, the 11:59pm Tuesday deadline for match uploads will be enforced, as will the \$50 per day fine for clubs who miss the deadline
6. Each home team is eligible to submit to the WPL for up to \$75 reimbursement per match

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

for videography costs. To submit for reimbursement, please follow the below protocol:

- a. Teams will pay their videographer directly and obtain a receipt/proof of payment.
- b. Teams will submit appropriate paperwork to the Membership Director to be reimbursed from the WPL account by before the End of Year meeting following Nationals.
- c. Reimbursement will be subject to MD approval to ensure the standards set forth in the WPL Match Video Protocol (Appendix IX) have been met.

P. Sponsorship and Marketing

1. Each club within the League may seek and secure sponsorship of their team to help offset costs. There will be no initial restriction on length of sponsor contracts.
2. If a potential League sponsor is identified and approached, the Governing Council will take into consideration possible conflicts with any existing sponsor contracts already enacted by member clubs. The goal is to add overall sponsorship rather than to restrict member club sponsor activity.
3. In April 2017, the League entered into a three-year licensing agreement with Rugby Athletic LLC (RA), giving RA licensee to print and sell, both online and at events, WPL merchandise, expiring on December 31, 2019. As part of the agreement, the WPL agrees to use RA as the preferred and exclusive vendor for all WPL materials and to purchase with RA first. Should RA be unable to provide services, WPL may look elsewhere.
4. In May 2018, the League entered into an agreement with FloRugby to expire December 31, 2024 regarding exclusive live-streaming rights of WPL Championships as well as other details.
5. Profits from the sale of team merchandise will be retained by member teams. However, non-team-specific marketing/promotion revenue will be retained by the League as a whole unless otherwise exempt.

Q. Governing Council

1. The positions in the governance structure are as follows:
 - a. **League Commissioner**
 - i. Responsible for overall managerial oversight of the League
 - ii. Works in coordination with the Governing Council Reps to ensure that League principles are upheld and that the League is strategic in its actions toward meeting its goals
 - iii. Primary responsibility:
 1. Oversight of Governing Council Reps (including assistance with achievement of their tasks/areas of primary responsibility)
 2. Key Partner communications (with USA Rugby, National Referees, National Team staff, Media, etc.)
 3. Annual review/renewal of League Agreement
 4. Special projects
 - iv. Appointed by GC to a four-year term (to provide continuity of vision and leadership) [Every other even year]
 - b. **Competition Director**

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- i. Primary areas of responsibility:
 - 1. Season schedule
 - 2. Competition rules & regulations
 - 3. Match Report contents and process
 - 4. Coordinate Nationals with local club.
 - ii. Elected by WPL Member Clubs to a two-year term (to ensure continuity of work and knowledge) [Every odd year]
 - c. Marketing & Sponsorship Director**
 - i. Primary areas of responsibility:
 - 1. Brand management
 - 2. External communications policy & implementation
 - 3. Website & social media policy development, implementation & oversight
 - 4. Corporate sponsorship
 - ii. Elected by WPL Member Clubs to a two-year term, offset by one year from Competition Director [Every even year]
 - d. Membership Director**
 - i. Primary areas of responsibility:
 - 1. Member club data, communications & well-being
 - a. Coordinate and run periodic conference calls.
 - b. Provide regular updates to member clubs.
 - c. Seek feedback from member clubs.
 - 2. Member club adherence to league rules & regulations, including assessment of fines
 - 3. Collegiate Recruitment strategy
 - 4. White paper/Best Practices Project
 - a. Fundraising, competitive second side, youth program, team culture, etc.
 - ii. Elected by WPL Member Clubs to a two-year term, in the same year as Competition Director [Every odd year]
 - e. USA Rugby Representative**
 - i. Primary responsibility:
 - 1. Representing USAR in all discussions/decisions
 - 2. Assisting the GC as needed, according to workload
 - ii. Requested to join GC by Commissioner
- 2. The three directors are elected by the member Clubs. The directors will be representing all 10 clubs on the Council, not just their own affiliated club.
- 3. The Governing Council will hold a monthly conference call to discuss any necessary League business and can hold emergency sessions as required. Minutes from the call will be distributed to each member club within 5 days of the call.
- 4. The Governing Council will be responsible for the following:
 - a. General administration of the League, including communication and interaction with USA Rugby and oversight of the League account
 - b. Managing the collection of the League Fee, the payment of all approved League expenses, and the dispersal of any remaining funds

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- c. Collecting and analyzing the League's travel data
 - d. Working with USAR in securing bids and selecting the venue for WPL Championships, as well as distributing access to all matches to each team within the designated number of hours following the conclusion of each day's matches.
 - e. Hearing and ruling on any member club grievances, with the exception of Eligibility and Disciplinary issues, as discussed below
 - f. Bringing any larger issues and major proposals to the whole League, to be voted on by one representative from each member club
 - g. In conjunction with USA Rugby, managing the search for, and relationship with, national title sponsors for the League or the National Championship
 - h. Assessing fines for non-compliance in a number of areas, including late posting of match video by home team and late payment of Annual Dues
 - i. When a club has been assessed a fine, the GC will email an invoice to the offending club
 - ii. The penalty for non-payment of fines will be a prohibition from registration at the WPL National Championships.
 - i. Notifying clubs of new language regarding the adjustment or addition of policies to the League Agreement during the competitive season, as appropriate and necessary, and conducting a time-sensitive electronic vote to ratify the revised League Agreement. Non-responses by clubs will be considered abstentions.
5. Special Assessment for 2019 only and to be re-evaluated at the end of season meeting.
- a. In order to be successful, the League leadership structure will require significant hours of work by the Directors and the Commissioner. To provide incentive and support for that level of commitment, a stipend will be given for each position.
 - i. League Commissioner: \$1,600
 - ii. Directors: \$800 each
 - b. Each WPL member club will pay \$400 towards the special assessment unless voted on to use WPL account surplus funds.
 - c. Payment of Special Assessment to be due December 1, 2019 unless otherwise decided at the End of Year Meeting.

R. Discipline

All disciplinary actions will be brought forward to the Disciplinary Committee of the WPL in accordance with the Disciplinary Rules and Regulations approved by the WPL member clubs. (See Appendix IV.)

S. Grievances

1. Any grievance relating to Eligibility will be brought forward to the Eligibility Committee of USA Rugby, as per the normal procedures for the committee.
2. Other grievances relating specifically to the Premiership will be brought forward to the Governing Council.
3. All member clubs agree to submit to the ruling of the appropriate committee or the Governing Council. All clubs have recourse to use USA Rugby's Appellate Panel if they wish to appeal a particular decision.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT**T. Annual Meeting**

1. At the end of each year, the Governing Council will call a full in-person League Annual Meeting, comprised of 1-3 representatives from each member club, the full GC, and USA Rugby representatives, as appropriate. Each team is required to have at least one representative present at the meeting for the full duration.
2. In 2019, the Annual Meeting will take place on the Monday after the WPL National Championship (November 4, 2019), at that location.
3. At that meeting, the Council will lead a year-end assessment reviewing what worked well and what needs to be adjusted and determining any changes required moving forward. This is expected to be a robust and in-depth meeting that will cover major issues and require full participation by all member clubs.
4. The Council will provide a summary of the notes from the meeting to all member clubs and to USA Rugby.

U. League Benefits to Member Clubs

1. A greatly increased number of high quality, competitive matches each fall (10), with a maximum of 5 travel weekends per season. The quality of play will be enhanced by the spacing of at least one week between all regular-season matches.
2. Opportunity to play a B-side match in conjunction with each League match, ensuring a full schedule and sound opponents for the club's second side and ensuring that the club's sides can travel and play together, as currently preferred by member clubs.
3. All League matches officiated by the top referees in the country.
4. Access to video of all League matches within 48 hours of the event.
5. Accelerated coach development opportunities from USA Rugby.
6. Access to Best Practice reports regarding club management/administration, recruiting and retaining players, maintaining a consistent B-side, fundraising, etc. These Best Practices will be developed based on interviews with clubs successful in each area and will be available to all clubs.
7. Access to sample sponsorship proposals, and other marketing assistance.
8. Opportunity to develop club brand in conjunction with the League, in order to pursue sponsorship opportunities.

V. Commitment from Clubs

1. Agree that member clubs and individual club members will continue to be governed by USA Rugby membership, eligibility, disciplinary and other rules.
2. Agree to submit match scores, reports and film to USA Rugby, according to the timelines and policies above.
3. Agree to make a best effort to provide a match pitch in accordance with the specifications listed above.
4. Agree to provide a certified emergency medical professional at each home game.
5. Agree to commit to building a consistent and strong B-side and ideally a youth program as well, aiming for stable, well-organized club that can continue to welcome and appropriately develop all interested players and grow the sport
6. Agree to retain an adequate number of qualified coaches to provide all players with

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

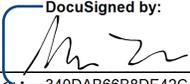
- coaching relevant to their capabilities, not just the top players.
7. Agree to pay an additional, agreed upon, League Fee, to cover referee and other direct expenses.
 8. Agree to keep club website updated on a regular basis.
 9. Agree to strive to follow the mutually agreed upon League Hosting Guidelines.
 10. Agree to follow the WPL Match Day Requirements
 11. Agree to keep the WPL Master Document GoogleDoc updated with correct information and to submit required travel data.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

IV. SIGNATURES

Acting on behalf of my member club or USA Rugby, the provisions of this League Agreement are confirmed and agreed to by me on this date, _____, 2018 and are valid for one year.

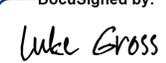
1. Atlanta Harlequins

Sharon Lau	Co-director
Printed Name	Club Title
<small>DocuSigned by:</small> 	7/25/2019
<small>340DAB66B8DE42C...</small> Signature	Date

2. Berkeley All-Blues

Monika Rozkowska	Vice President
Printed Name	Club Title
<small>DocuSigned by:</small> 	7/25/2019
<small>0B228E8134974A1...</small> Signature	Date

3. Glendale Raptors

Luke Gross	Glendale RFC
Printed Name	Club Title
<small>DocuSigned by:</small> 	7/25/2019
<small>F0119CF0BA8B404...</small> Signature	Date

4. New York RFC

Naomi Batzer	Vice President
Printed Name	Club Title
<small>DocuSigned by:</small> 	7/25/2019
<small>219FB5A93CF4484...</small> Signature	Date

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

5. Oregon State Union (ORSU)

Megan Adams President

Printed Name <small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Megan Adams</i>	Club Title 7/25/2019
<small>283E0B3B6AE04E1...</small> Signature	Date

6. San Diego Surfers

MELEAH MARTIN WPL Coordinator

Printed Name <small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>M Martin</i>	Club Title 7/26/2019
<small>90DA78BDCEC4415...</small> Signature	Date

7. Twin Cities Amazons

Xane Gerasimo WPL Rep

Printed Name <small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Xane Gerasimo</i>	Club Title 7/25/2019
<small>E23B89C3B6B9403...</small> Signature	Date

8. Life West

Adriaan Ferris Director of Rugby

Printed Name <small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Adriaan Ferris</i>	Club Title 7/26/2019
<small>CD65FDF8FC254AE...</small> Signature	Date

9. Beantown Rugby

Yeja Dunn President

Printed Name <small>DocuSigned by:</small> <i>Yeja Dunn</i>	Club Title 7/25/2019
<small>54E0D5A5A5454E4...</small> Signature	Date

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

Signature

Date

10. Chicago North Shore

Betty Nguyen

President

Printed Name

Club Title

DocuSigned by:


7/25/2019

Signature

Date

11. Representative for USA Rugby

Printed Name

Title

Signature

Date

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

Signature

Date

10. Chicago North Shore

Printed Name

Club Title

Signature

Date

11. Representative for USA Rugby

Kurt Weaver

VP, Rugby Operations

Printed Name

Title


Signature

August 14, 2019

Date

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT**V. APPENDIX****APPENDIX I: 2019 MATCH SCHEDULE***(subject to change)*

West - Blue Conference					East - Red Conference				
Week	Date	Conf.	Home	Opponent	Week	Date	Conf.	Home	Opponent
Week 1	8/18	Blue	Glendale	Life West	Week 1	8/18	Red	Beantown	Atlanta
Week 1	8/18	Blue	All Blues	ORSU	Week 1	8/18	Red	North Shore	Amazons
Week 1	Bye	Blue	Surfers		Week 1	Bye	Red	NYRC	
Week 2	8/25	Blue	Life West	ORSU	Week 2	8/25	Red	Atlanta	NYRC
Week 2	8/24	Blue	Surfers	Glendale	Week 2	8/25	Red	Beantown	Amazons
Week 2	Bye	Blue	All Blues		Week 2	Bye	Red	North Shore	
Week 3	9/1	Blue	ORSU	Surfers	Week 3	9/1	Red	Amazons	Atlanta
Week 3	9/1	Blue	Life West	All Blues	Week 3	9/1	Red	NYRC	North Shore
Week 3	Bye	Blue	Glendale		Week 3	Bye	Red	Beantown	
Week 4	9/8	Blue	Surfers	Life West	Week 4	9/8	Red	North Shore	Beantown
Week 4	9/8	Blue	All Blues	Glendale	Week 4	9/8	Red	Amazons	NYRC
Week 4	Bye	Blue	ORSU		Week 4	Bye	Red	Atlanta	
Week 5	9/15	Blue	Glendale	ORSU	Week 5	9/15	Red	North Shore	Atlanta
Week 5	9/15	Blue	All Blues	Surfers	Week 5	9/15	Red	Beantown	NYRC
Week 5	Bye	Blue	Life West		Week 5	Bye	Red	Amazons	
Week 6	9/22	Blue	ORSU	All Blues	Week 6	9/22	Red	Atlanta	Beantown
Week 6	9/22	Blue	Life West	Glendale	Week 6	9/22	Red	Amazons	North Shore
Week 6	Bye	Blue	Surfers		Week 6	Bye	Red	NYRC	
Week 7	9/29	Blue	All Blues	Life West	Week 7	9/29	Red	Amazons	Beantown
Week 7	9/29	Blue	Surfers	ORSU	Week 7	9/29	Red	NYRC	Atlanta
Week 7	Bye	Blue	Glendale		Week 7	Bye	Red	North Shore	
Week 8	10/6	Blue	Life West	Surfers	Week 8	10/6	Red	Atlanta	Amazons
Week 8	10/6	Blue	Glendale	All Blues	Week 8	10/6	Red	North Shore	NYRC
Week 8	Bye	Blue	ORSU		Week 8	Bye	Red	Beantown	
Week 9	10/20	Blue	ORSU	Glendale	Week 9	10/20	Red	Beantown	North Shore
Week 9	10/20	Blue	Surfers	All Blues	Week 9	10/20	Red	NYRC	Amazons
Week 9	Bye	Blue	Life West		Week 9	Bye	Red	Atlanta	
Week 10	10/26	Blue	Glendale	Surfers	Week 10	10/27	Red	Atlanta	North Shore
Week 10	10/27	Blue	ORSU	Life West	Week 10	10/27	Red	NYRC	Beantown
Week 10	Bye	Blue	All Blues		Week 10	Bye	Red	Amazons	

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

APPENDIX II: LEAGUE MATCH REPORT

1. The WPL Match Report is comprised of four documents:
 - a. The official Home team roster, signed by Home team
 - b. The official Away team roster, signed by Away team
 - c. The Player Movement Form, signed by Home & Away teams and Referee
 - d. The Running Score Form, signed by Home & Away teams and Referee
2. All four documents must be scanned and uploaded by the Home team, fully completed, to USA Rugby and copying the Competition Director within 24 hours of the completion of the match, as per Section N,1,e (Regular Season Match Reporting Responsibilities) above
3. All four documents making up the official WPL Match Report are contained in the WPL Match Day Requirements document
4. WPL Home teams are required to provide a person to act as a #4 official at each match.
 - a. The duties of a #4 official are straightforward and do not require any special training; reading the instructions provided below will suffice.
 - b. The #4 provided by the home team would ideally not be a reserve player or a coach and would be able to do only that job for the entirety of the match.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

APPENDIX III: LEAGUE HOSTING GUIDELINES

1. The home team is required to make every effort to find free housing and ground transportation for the travel team and the travel team's B-side the night before the match. Ground transportation includes to and from the airport, the pitch, and the housing.
2. The housing should comply with the following standards
 - a. The housing should be a reasonable distance from the pitch
 - b. Each person should have a space on a bed or functional air mattress
 - c. If there are pets in the home, the guest should be consulted before agreeing to be housed there
 - d. Appropriate breakfast shall either be provided or easily accessible for purchase
3. Visiting team must provide numbers needing hosting and notice of any special requirements at least one week in advance of the match.
4. Visiting teams are requested to make every effort to arrive between 4pm and 10pm and to depart at 8am or later.
5. Visiting teams that elect to stay in hotels forfeit the right to have transportation provided by the hosting team.
6. The hosting team is not required to find free housing for additional nights (beyond the night before the match); however, all teams are encouraged to meet the reasonable hosting needs of the traveling team.
7. Water and ice shall be supplied to traveling team.
8. The home team shall provide food and drinks to traveling team immediately following the end of all games the traveling side is playing.

APPENDIX IV: WPL DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURES

Please refer to the most up to date document on <http://wplrugby.org/about/league/>

APPENDIX V: LEAGUE PROMOTION/RELEGATION POLICY

(Updated 3/23/2018)

Introduction

This document details the 2018 policy of the Women's Premier League (WPL) Committee for providing an opportunity for Division 1 (D1) club teams to move into the WPL. Following the successful multi-year process of expanding the WPL from the original size of eight teams to ten in 2017, as of the 2017 League Annual Meeting, the WPL committee believes the pathway for D1 teams to challenge into the League should be reopened. This promotion/relegation policy provides an opportunity for D1 teams to move into and compete in the WPL, which should raise the level of play in the D1 teams as well. This Promotion/Relegation policy will be automatically suspended for no less than one year following any significant structural changes (ie. expansion of the League) to the League and will be assessed for reinstatement by the WPL member teams following any suspension.

Policy Summary

The WPL is the top level of women's club rugby in the USA. The League was created to foster the highest possible level of competition and to that end, has implemented a number of very stringent administrative, financial, and competitive requirements. These requirements are vital to the success of the League and are voluntarily agreed to and adhered to by all WPL member clubs, each of which has committed to working hard to fully participate, for the mutual benefit of all. Execution of these WPL requirements is not easy and represents significant adjustments for any teams moving up into the WPL. Therefore, the WPL's Promotion/Relegation Policy addresses three key issues: determining whether the challenging teams meet the WPL's administrative and financial criteria, determining which teams should move into or out of the League, and determining when and where the challenge matches should occur. The resulting policy is as follows:

For each year that the promotion/relegation policy is active, the lowest two teams in the WPL can be challenged by the top two Division 1 teams. The challenge matches will take place within 2-4 weeks of WPL Nationals at a site in a warm location. This will begin following the 2018 WPL and D1 National Championships (i.e., to determine the WPL teams for 2019) and each year after that. This policy will be suspended following any significant structural changes to the WPL and may be reviewed and revised at the discretion of WPL leadership.

Policy Detail: Lower Division Team Eligibility to Challenge

In following with the founding principles of the WPL, the results of one competitive season is not the sole factor in determining eligibility for the WPL. Administrative, financial, and

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

historical consistency/sustainability of a team are also relevant in the determination of a DI team's ability to meet the WPL criteria.

In addition, the WPL notes that eligibility and determination of what Division a team competes at below the WPL level is determined by USA Rugby and is outside of the discretion of the WPL. The WPL will follow USAR's decisions on eligibility to compete for DI National Championships in determining what teams qualify for a challenge match.

Following the D1 Spring National Championships weekend, the WPL Commissioner will reach out to the final first and second place DI teams to ask:

- (a) Whether they will challenge for a WPL spot;
- (b) If so, the team will be asked to review the WPL League Agreement and a summary of other key WPL obligations (such as the estimated total cost per team to travel for the WPL season) and sign a document that commits the team to play in a challenge match at a specified location and specified date within 2-4 weeks of the WPL Fall National Championships of the same calendar year and to fulfill all of the obligations in the WPL agreement (if they win the challenge match).

The required document is the WPL Promotion/Relegation Policy Participation Agreement and the deadline for receipt by the WPL Commissioner is July 1 of the year in question.

If eligible D1 teams fail to submit the required signed document by the deadline, the team will forfeit their chance to participate in the challenge match and the team will remain in D1.

Policy Detail: WPL Teams Eligible to Be Challenged

As above, the bottom two WPL teams can be challenged for their spots. As per the standing following all games played as of after Week 9 in the regular season, the bottom two seeded WPL teams seeds from each conference will be asked to sign their intent to meet a challenge. Specifically, if they finish 9th or 10th in the WPL and are challenged, whether they will commit to play in a challenge match at a specified location and specified date within 2-4 weeks of Nationals. If a WPL team that finishes 9th or 10th does not play in the designated challenge match, it is a forfeit and that team will play in the D1 league the following year. The D1 team scheduled to play that team wins the challenge match by forfeit and moves into the WPL the following year.

The required document is the WPL Promotion/Relegation Policy Participation Agreement and the deadline for receipt by the WPL Commissioner the Monday prior to WPL Championships.

If any of the lower four teams in the WPL fail to submit the required signed document by the

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

deadline, the team will forfeit their chance to accept the challenge from the D1 teams and relinquish the team's spot in the WPL, should a challenge occur.

Assuming that both of the top D1 teams want the opportunity to play in the WPL, the top D1 team would play a challenge match against the #10 WPL team. Similarly, the #2 D1 team would play a challenge match against the #9 WPL team. Between the winners of the challenge matches, the higher ranked team would become the #9 WPL team. (The teams are ranked WPL #9, WPL #10, D1 #1 and D1 #2 from highest to lowest.)

If the top D1 team did not want to challenge or could not meet the WPL requirements, the #2 D1 team would challenge the #10 WPL team and the #9 WPL team would not be challenged.

Policy Detail: Challenge Match

Challenge matches would take place at the same site on the same day in a warm climate within 2-4 weeks of WPL Championships. The WPL or USA Rugby will be responsible for identifying the city and date of the challenge matches during the fall season, so it is known before Nationals.

Holding the challenge match within 4 weeks of WPL Championships offers the best combination of: the WPL team maintaining play at a high level for the challenge match, after peaking throughout the fall for Nationals; the DI team given an adequate amount of time to prepare for the challenge over the course of the Fall while still being able to play an additional competitive DI season; playing the matches in a location that provides a good chance for reasonable weather; preventing teams from having to practice indoors or in freezing weather for more than 2-4 weeks; ensuring continuity of rosters from Nationals as much as possible; and, determining the teams in the WPL and D1 early enough to allow clubs time to get fields, fundraise and plan for the WPL season as well as the clubs' development in the spring.

Eligibility for players to compete in the Challenge match would be as follows:

The WPL teams' player eligibility would be the same as for competition at the WPL National Championships. If a player was eligible to play in that year's Championship matches for the team, they would be eligible to compete in the challenge match.

The DI teams' player eligibility to compete in the Challenge match would be either:

- CIPPed with the team at the time of the June DI National Championships and eligible to compete in the match that enabled the team to Challenge.
- CIPPed with the team as of the WPL National Championships of that year and have played in at least three competitive games with the team before the Challenge match.

Note that the Challenge match would not count as a competitive match that would impact players' eligibility for play in other divisions.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

If the two teams in a challenge match want to play in an alternative location (e.g., if they are in the same area on the East Coast), they can opt out of the pre-set location. The game must still be played on the pre set date. The following must be satisfied:

1. Both teams must agree to the location
2. Both teams must split the cost of flying the referee to the agreed upon location
3. Both teams must agree upon hosting arrangements
4. Both teams must sort out any other logistics associated with the match so that the match fulfills WPL standards as set forth in the WPL League Agreement and Match Day Requirements

This must be completed by as early as possible, but no later than the Friday following the WPL National Championship event. The details must be provided to the WPL Commissioner by COB the Friday following Nationals in an email that both teams agree to and are copied on.

Representatives from the WPL teams and the eligible D1 teams must make arrangements to attend the WPL end of year meeting to be held the Monday following Nationals at the same location as Nationals.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

APPENDIX VI: 2019 PROMOTION/RELEGATION CALENDAR

- June – Reminder of WPL Promotion/Relegation Policy requirements sent to D1 teams who have qualified for DI Championships.
- July – The WPL Promotion/Relegation Policy Participation Agreement is sent to the top two D1 teams.
- September 1, 2019 – Division I Teams' signed WPL Promotion/Relegation Policy Participation Agreement is due
- October 15, 2019 – The bottom two teams per conference as ranked by that day are asked a) if they want to stay in the WPL; and b) if so, the team will be asked to commit to play in a challenge match.
- October 29, 2019 – Bottom WPL teams must return the signed P/R Participation Agreement form.
- November – Up to two challenge matches may be played at a specified location set up by the WPL Governing Council and/or USA Rugby.

WOMEN’S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

APPENDIX VII: PROMOTION/RELEGATION – PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

The Women’s Premier League (WPL) is the top level of women’s club rugby in the USA. The League was created to foster the highest possible level of competition and to that end, has implemented a number of very stringent administrative, financial and competitive requirements. These requirements are vital to the success of the League and are voluntarily agreed to and adhered to by all WPL member clubs, each of which has committed to working very hard to fully participate, for the mutual benefit of all. Execution of these WPL requirements is not easy and represents significant adjustments for any teams moving up into the WPL.

This document must be signed and returned to the WPL Commissioner by _____. Failure to submit this signed document by the deadline will result in forfeiture of the opportunity to participate in a challenge match and potentially promote to the WPL (top D1 clubs) or forfeiture of the opportunity to accept a challenge and automatic relegation to Division 1 if challenged (bottom WPL clubs).

By signing this document, we are hereby agreeing that our club _____ :

1. Has reviewed in detail the Women’s Premier League Agreement and has held appropriate discussion among our executive board and/or general membership to ensure that we understand and are ready to commit to the WPL requirements, should the opportunity arise;
2. Is financially able to travel to at least three cross country matches per year; (The average cost the teams spent to travel was \$13,000 and \$15,000 in 2015 and 2014, respectively.)
3. Will definitely challenge for a spot in the WPL, should we win or place second in the D1 Championships;
4. Will travel to the challenge match location 2-4 weeks after WPL Nationals; and
5. Will join the WPL and meet all the requirements as stated in the WPL League Agreement, if we are successful in our challenge match.

Club Name

Club Representative Name

Club Representative Signature

Date

APPENDIX VIII: HISTORICAL CONTEXT FOR PROMOTION/RELEGATION**Process for Creation of 2010-2012 WPL Promotion/Relegation Policy**

The WPL Expansion/Promotion/Relegation Committee met five times between June 8, 2010 and August 2, 2010 to identify the issues, draft communication material, develop options, discuss input and ideas on other approaches, and develop this policy. In late June, USA Rugby sent a press release to all Territorial Union presidents and contacts at all WPL and D1 women's clubs, announcing the committee's work and asking for input from D1 teams. During late June and the first few weeks of July, the committee solicited input from WPL and D1 teams on a fair way to determine which teams should move into the WPL and whether the challenging teams meet the stringent WPL administrative and financial criteria. On July 21, the WPL Committee met to discuss the input collected from the WPL and D1 clubs, developed several options and identified outstanding questions. The WPL Committee solicited input from WPL and D1 clubs on these options by continuing to reach out to them and during an open call on July 27, in which a number of women's clubs participated. On August 2, the WPL Committee met to narrow down the options and to develop this final policy. The policy was formally adopted and used during the 2010 WPL Season. Minor adjustments were made to the policy during the 2010 WPL Annual Meeting and those changes are reflected in this document and in the WPL P/R Policy Participation Agreement.

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT**APPENDIX IX: WPL MATCH VIDEO PROTOCOL**

This document is intended to provide protocols and standards by which all WPL matches will be filmed and shared and all match scores and rosters reported. The purpose of providing protocols and standards is to ensure a basic level of video quality and accessibility that enables coaches, athletes and referees to assess performance of the athletes, the teams and the referees. Video analysis is a key tool for promoting improvement and as one of the major goals of the League is to raise the level of play of women's rugby in the U.S., the ability to analyze video of WPL matches is critical. It is in the collective interest of the League, therefore, for all teams to honor their commitment to following these protocols and standards and to providing timely and quality match video of every WPL league match.

The language in the League Agreement stipulates that the home team will upload videos of the match to the USAR youtube account to be accessed by all WPL teams and USA Rugby.

Finally, as per the League Agreement, it is important that official records of scores and rosters be kept. The reporting protocols are detailed below.

1. Match Filming Protocol

- a. Each WPL team should designate a person responsible for managing the match filming and video-sharing protocol for the entire League season, thus ensuring consistency of process and appropriate quality of match film.
- b. The home team is responsible for filming each League match and following the video sharing protocol.
- c. The home team will be provided with a radio that connects the referee mic to the audio input for the video camera. Home teams are required to use attach the radio so that the ref feed is integrated into the sound of the video.

2. Match Filming Standards

- a. Ideally, the match will be filmed using a digital camera, to enable faster and higher quality uploading to the video sharing site. If a digital camera is not available, the video will have to be digitized using iMovie or other such software in order to enable uploading to the website.
- b. Match must be filmed using a tripod or other similar means of providing a stable base for the camera.
- c. Match must be filmed from a vantage point higher than the ground level, minimum 10 feet above the ground, to enable a clear view of the action. Ladders, car roofs, permanent or temporary scaffolding are all good options.
- d. Match must be filmed from a central point, ideally near the 50 meter line.
- e. Teams must attempt to film on the side of the field that reserve players are not.
- f. The person filming the match must have some familiarity and experience with operating the camera and ideally with filming rugby matches.

3. Video Tips

WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE – 2019 LEAGUE AGREEMENT

- a. Please keep conversation to an absolute minimum while you are filming. It is important that there is as little telling of life stories/last nights adventures/etc as possible as the video is viewed by teams, players, coaches and USA rugby staff.
- b. Depending on the type of camera it is preferred that you do not stop recording at any point from the start to the end of the game. It's better to stay with the camera and leave it running the whole time (makes it lots easier to download the video afterwards). Make sure you take everything you're going to need then at the start of the game: extra clothes, water, food, etc.
- c. If it is expected to rain, try to protect the camera. Two people should be assigned to filming. One should hold a cover/umbrella over the camera.
- d. The video should be focused on the play, so you must zoom in and out as the play changes.
 - i. A good rule of thumb: get the lineout/scrum/ruck and 3-4 backs from each team.
 - ii. If ball is kicked or moves to open play, zoom out until it's clear where the play is going. But having 3-4 backs from each team plus the engagement ensures that the camera is zoomed close enough so we can see what's happening, but you can also see the set up for what's going to happen next.
 - iii. Zoom out in open play and zoom in as the tackle happens and stay zoomed as ruck forms. When the ball can be seen at the back of the ruck zoom out again.
 - iv. Remain zoomed out at scrums until the crouch call (so the offside line for the backs can be seen). At "crouch", zoom in until the scrum fills the space. After "Set", zoom out slowly until the ball is at the back of the scrum, at this point we should again be able to see where the backs are before the ball comes out.