

## **PITCH PROTOCOL**

Please find below the protocol for calling games off due to unplayable surface. Can you please circulate to the Clubs within your League.

A common sense approach needs to be applied.

If the pitch is thought to be unplayable by the club Groundsman or Local Authority Groundsman prior to the day of the game every effort should be made to find an alternative pitch.

The Match Official is responsible for calling games off if the pitch is deemed unplayable on the day of the game.

The pitch inspection should be carried out two hours prior to a game or before the visiting team departs for the game – whichever is the sooner.

The Match Official should make the decision in accordance with the “Natural Turf Inspection Form” (next page) and in consultation with the Groundsman if present.

The Match Official should consult both coaches before confirming the decision.

The “Natural Turf Inspection Form” then needs to be completed by MO and sent to the Competition Administrator.

If the game does not have an appointed Match Official (e.g. Primary Rugby League) the coaches should make an informed decision based on player welfare. The “Natural Turf Inspection Form” may still be used.

For games where a full pitch is not required, alternative playing areas such as schools, parks and other grassed venues can be sought.

The condition of the pitch is the responsibility of the Club. If pitches are not in good condition the Club should talk the Local Authority to discuss how improvements can be made.

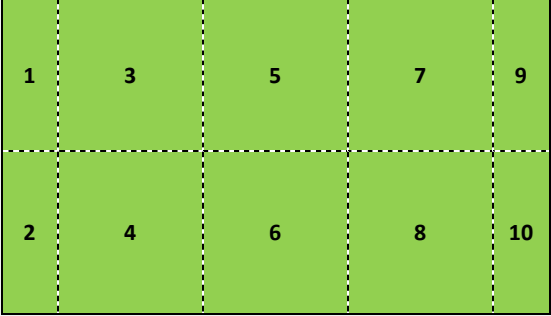
With the prospect of the weather not relenting Clubs are encouraged to review the state of their pitches as soon as practicably possible. One solution could be that fixtures are reversed.

<b>Club</b>		<b>League</b>	
<b>Match</b>		<b>Date</b>	

Pitch Inspection checklist	<b>Wet Pitch</b>			
	Visual inspection - surface water puddles	Walk on - squelchy under foot	Comments	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<b>Dry Pitch</b>			
	Visual inspection - poor grass coverage - greater than 10% bare patches or weeds	Walk on - feels hard with uneven or rutted surface	Comments	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<b>Frozen Pitch</b>			
	Visual inspection - frost on surface	Walk on - feels hard underfoot	Garden fork test	Comments
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<b>Snow</b>			
	Visual inspection - more than dusting of snow	Walk on - feels hard underfoot	Garden fork test	Comments
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

<b>Inspected by (Groundsman, Official, Coach)</b>		<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Agreed by (Official, Coach, Club Secretary)</b>		<b>Signature</b>	

<b>Game called off due to:</b>	Wet Pitch <input type="checkbox"/>	Dry Pitch <input type="checkbox"/>	Frozen Pitch <input type="checkbox"/>	Snow <input type="checkbox"/>
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<p><b>Guidance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walk-on and visual inspections should be carried out across all 10 areas as illustrated</li> <li>• The Pitch Inspection should be carried out two hours prior to a match or before the visiting teams departs for the game – whichever is the sooner</li> <li>• Good healthy grass coverage is essential to reduce the cancellation of games in dry weather. There should be <u>no more than 10%</u> bare areas</li> <li>• Soil compaction can contribute significantly to poor drainage problems</li> </ul> <p>Please visit <a href="http://www.rugby-league.com/the_rfl/great_places_to_play">http://www.rugby-league.com/the_rfl/great_places_to_play</a> for further guidance on natural turf pitches</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p><b>Garden Fork Test</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold garden fork with outstretched arm at shoulder height and release</li> <li>• If fork penetrates the surface = fit to play</li> <li>• If fork does not penetrate surface = <u>NOT</u> fit to play</li> </ul>
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