

New Junior Rugby League Structures

This season sees a completely new league structure for Junior Rugby in Leinster. In place of the old system of J1, J2, J3 etc, there will now be eleven divisions covering all grades of Junior Rugby, with straight promotion and relegation. Each division will contain eight teams, who will play each other home and away. The composition of each division will be based largely on where each team finished last season, eg the top eight teams in the J1 league last season will be in Division 1, and the bottom eight teams at J5 level last year will be in the new Division 11.

At the end of the season, there will be play-offs for both promotion and relegation. For promotion, second and third place will play off in a semi-final (second place will be at home). The winner will play the first placed team for the league title and promotion (the first placed team will have home advantage). Meanwhile, the bottom two will face each other to decide who finishes last and is relegated.



Why the changes? Basically it's to make Junior Rugby more transparent and competitive. It will mean that every side will find it's own level in a division in which they can compete on a level playing field. It also means that at the end of each season, all but three teams in each division (4th, 5th and 6th) will have a further match in the play-offs, making dead rubbers a thing of the past.

So far, so simple. However, there is one complication. There can only be ONE team from each club in each division. So, Terenure Seconds and Terenure Thirds cannot be in the same league.

So... If a club wins a division and gets promoted, but that club already has a team in the division above, they will stay in their own division, while the team that came second will get promoted - unless they also have another team in the division above, in which case no-one gets promoted and no-one gets relegated from the division above.

It's similar for relegation. For example, if Terenure Fourths were in Division 5 and got relegated, and Terenure Fifths were already in Division 6, then both teams would be relegated from their divisions. So Terenure Fourths would drop to Division 6, and Terenure Fifths would drop to Division 7, and so on and so on until all Terenure's teams are accommodated.

Got that? Good. Now the good news - no Terenure sides are in consecutive divisions, so at least for this year, we don't have to worry about our sides clashing! However, it might come into play for some teams around us.

The leagues and cups will run on similar dates as always, with the cup you play in decided by which league you played in during the season. Although there may be minor changes during the season, the cups will be as follows:

- Divisions 1 and 2 - Metropolitan Cup
- Divisions 3 and 4 - Albert O'Connell Cup
- Divisions 5 and 6 - Moran Cup
- Divisions 7,8 and 9 - Winters Cup
- Divisions 10 and 11 - O'Connor Cup



FAQ:

- What are our teams called now? Our teams are now simply called the firsts, seconds, thirds and so on.
- What Division is my team in? What day are we playing on? The divisions themselves are available on the Leinster Domestic website, along with all the season's fixtures.
- Why can't two teams from the same club be in the same league? This is to make sure that nobody stacks a lower side with players from a higher level. In reality, it will only come into play on a very few occasions when teams get promoted or relegated- this season it could only possibly happen in three divisions