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## **PREFACE**

**This document contains the Regulations which govern the 2019/20 National Leagues competition.**

**This document includes General Regulations applicable to all competitions and a series of competition-specific regulations.**

**It is the responsibility of club management to ensure that all players, coaches and staff are conversant, and comply, with these regulations and the rules of the game as detailed in the British American Football Rule Book.**

**Including by way of example only, club management are responsible for ensuring the proper behaviour of their players, coaches, staff and spectators on game day. In the event of a breach of the regulations and rules by a player, coach and/or staff, or in the event of improper behaviour by players, coaches, staff and/or spectators on game day, then BAFA reserves the right to take action against the club and/or club management in addition to any action it may take against the player, coaches, staff and/or spectator concerned.**

**These regulations may from time to time, be updated, and supported by additional guidelines for specific competitions. All persons should regularly check the footer in this document to see what version of regulations these are.**

## 2019/2020 RULES AND REGULATIONS UPDATES

The table below list all amendments to the Competition Rules and Regulations for 2019/2020

Reference	Action	Description
<a href="#">Preface</a>	Added section about behaviour of players, coaches, staff and spectators	To make it clear that in the event of misconduct by players, coaches, staff and/or spectators that disciplinary action can also be taken against the club
<a href="#">3.6</a>	Add further information about age ranges	Added further details of minimum age requirements for coaching
<a href="#">3.7.1</a>	Added reference to participating in GB activities	To make it clear that participating in GB activities does not count as 'moving up' age groups, so a junior player can attend, for example, trials for the GB adult team without losing their junior eligibility
<a href="#">4.6</a>	Added reference to entering team information when registering	To make it clear that clubs must enter contact information and details about their home and away jerseys for each team they register
<a href="#">5.3</a>	Definition of new player	To make it clear that the 3 sessions before a player has to register with BAFA only applies to players new to the sport, and does not apply, for example, to players transferring between clubs
<a href="#">5.7</a>	Rosters	To make it clear that teams must use both a photo roster and a GDPR compliant roster
<a href="#">5.14</a>	Debt	To make it clear that a debt to BAFA (e.g. a disciplinary fine, or a debt owed to the GB team) can also be grounds to deny a transfer
<a href="#">5.18</a>	Registrations	To make it clear that for players over the age of 16 that they should complete their own BAFA registration, and that it is a disciplinary offence for both the player, and the club concerned, if someone else completes the registration.
<a href="#">8.2</a>	Streaming	To give BAFA the right to stream any league, or play off, game.
<a href="#">12.4</a>	Self officiating	Where a game is self officiating the obligation is on the home team to provide the three officials, but the away team has the right to provide one of the officials if they elect to do so.
<a href="#">13.4.5</a>	Tournament start times	To reflect the rule introduced during last season to make sure that for flag tournaments the start time of the tournament should not require an away team to leave their home venue before 7am in the morning
<a href="#">13.19</a>	Forfeits	To make it clear that for a tournament a forfeit occurs where a team forfeits a tournament, as opposed to one game within a tournament
<a href="#">13.20</a>	Forfeit by home team	To make it clear that where a home team for a tournament forfeits that they are liable for the costs of hosting the tournament at an alternative venue
<a href="#">M.11</a>	Away jerseys	To make it clear that a team's away jerseys should be of a contrasting colour to the home jersey.

## **1. GENERAL REGULATIONS**

### **1. DEFINITIONS**

**1.1** BAFA shall mean the British American Football Association.

**1.2** Contact shall mean, in the context of the game, the contact variant of American Football where players come into contact with one another when tackling.

**1.3** Non-contact shall mean the non-contact version of the game where tackles are made by removing a flag belt from an opponent. The term can be used interchangeably with FlagFootball.

**1.4** Team shall mean Team as required by the context of this document which plays host to an individual member of the British American Football Association registered for the purposes of taking part in competition.

**1.5** Contrasting Colour shall mean a different colour or different shade of the same colour that contrast with each other as to be immediately differentiated one from the other.

**1.6** Game Management means the whole of the process of managing, controlling and organising a game day or tournament. It includes arranging everything necessary for a game or tournament to go ahead, from the organisation and regulation of the spectators, game day facility, field, changing accommodation, medical facilities, officials' assistants, field equipment to all other matters referred to directly or indirectly (by implication) in these regulations.

**1.7** Game Management shall also mean those persons or those people designated by the home team or where appropriate the Competition Management, to manage game day or tournament activities.

**1.8** Game Rules refer to the BAFA sanctioned rules which guide the playing of the game of American football and its recognized variants.

**1.9** The Home Team shall be the team specified in the schedule as being the home team for that particular game regardless of the venue used for that game or tournament. The home team has a right of uniform colour choice.

**1.10** Competition Management shall be, as the context provides, the official management personnel and structures for the competition.

**1.11** Official Game shall mean a regular season game or tournament, play-off game or associate fixture, pre season game or tournament. Plus any game which involves at least one team representing a BAFA organisation (or any other game or tournament as may be specified by the Competition Management from time to time.)

**1.12** Officials' Assistants are the Chain Crew (including Box {down marker} operator), Ball Persons and any other persons deemed as appropriate to support by either consent of the Competition Management or the Head Referee. Officials Assistants must be aged 14 years or over.

**1.13** Referee and/or Officials are those persons designated to take charge of the game or tournament and apply the Game Rules.

**1.14** Club Management refers to those persons who hold a designated role in the management of participating National Leagues clubs and teams. They are the nominated contacts for liaising with the British American Football Association on matters that relate to their club and for ensuring that competition regulations are communicated and adhered to within their organization.

**1.15** Club Administrator refers to those persons who hold an administration role for their club on the National Leagues registration system provide by GoMembership!

**1.16** Registration Management refers to the dedicated administration team for the National Leagues registration system within the British American Football Association.

## **2. ORGANISATION AND ADMINISTRATION**

2.1 The competitions detailed in this document shall be known collectively as the British American Football Association National Leagues (herein referred to *The National Leagues*). They shall include:

- Adult Contact
- Junior Contact
- Youth Contact
- Adult Flag
- Youth Flag
- Cadet Flag
- Womens Flag (Opal competition)
- Womens Contact (Sapphire/Diamond competition)
- Development/Associate Fixtures for any of the above

2.2 For the purposes of these regulations and their provision, and unless otherwise determined by the British American Football Association, the competitions covered include both contact and non-contact versions of the game played at differing age levels and within recognised versions of the game.

2.3 The competitions and all rights and properties associated with it shall be owned, controlled and managed by the British American Football Association. From time to time it may delegate its powers and authority in this respect to any sub-committee, company or individual(s).

2.4 The name of any or all of those competitions, divisions or conferences which comprise the National Leagues shall be preceded by the name of such sponsor as The British American Football Association may direct from time to time, as well as the specific round at which the matches are taking place (i.e. Playoffs and National Finals)

2.5 The decisions of British American Football Association, or its nominee(s), in respect of these regulations and on any other matter related to the National Leagues competitions which is not provided for below, shall be considered final and binding on all parties (subject to the right of appeal which is specifically provided for in this document and wider Governing Body documentation).

2.6 It is the responsibility of all participants within the National Leagues to ensure that they are conversant with the following regulations.

2.7 The BAFA National Leagues are currently strictly amateur both by rule and as a condition of our insurance. Payment of players is forbidden. Any proven breach of this rule will lead to serious disciplinary action against both the club concerned and the player(s) involved. Such action may include fines, suspension, loss of league points or loss of league status.

## **3. QUALIFICATIONS AND ELIGIBILITY**

3.1 Team entry to any National Leagues discipline will be determined by the British American Football Association at its absolute discretion, subject to its reasonable application of the regulations laid out herein or those identified in the Associate Process for emerging and developing teams.

3.2 The British American Football Association may charge each team a competition entry fee.

3.3 By entering a team in the National Leagues teams agree that:

- They will abide by these Regulations
- They will abide by the Governing Body Rule Book and wider policies
- They are able and willing to fulfil the costs and commitments of participation in the competition.

3.4 In order to qualify to participate in the National Leagues a team must be recognised and accredited by the British American Football Association.

3.5 In order to qualify to participate in the National Leagues, a player, coach or other club staff member must be a member of the British American Football Association. This is achieved by purchasing a membership on the National Leagues registration system provided by GoMembership! and having been accepted by the relevant club and by the British American Football League.

3.6 All players and coaches must meet the age ranges set for the respective competitions as set out by the British American Football Association in these regulations and published on theBAFA website.

- Adult Contact 18+
- Junior Contact 16-19. Players must be under 19 on 31st of August in the year preceding the playing season. The minimum age is 16.
- Youth Contact 13-16. Players must be under 16 on 31st August in the year preceding the playing season. The minimum age is 13 years.
- Adult Flag 16+. The minimum age is 16 years.
- Youth Flag. Players must be under 16 on 31st of August in the year preceding the playing season. The minimum age is 13 years.
- Opal 16+. The minimum age is 16 years
- Sapphire 18+ (17 year olds can play with parental consent and subject to such additional conditions as may be specified by the Competition Management from time to time).
- Cadet Flag. Players must be under 13 on the 31st of August in the year preceding the playing season. The minimum age is 7.

- Contact coach or contact player / coach 18+
- Flag coach or flag player / coach 16+

3.7 Any contact player aged 16 has the option to choose between Youth contact OR Junior contact. Dual eligibility for youth and junior contact is not permitted.

Once a player moves up an age group, they are not permitted to move back down.

3.7.1 Similarly any contact player aged 18 has the choice to play Junior Contact or Adult Contact Football. Once a player moves up an age group, they are not permitted to move back down. **Playing in University (BUCS) Football, or participating in a national team event (including a trial, practice, game or other event), will not be considered as a move out of the NL Age Group.**

3.7.2 "Moving up" will be considered as taking part in any organised training session, scrimmage or game at the older age group level.

3.8 Mixed age ranges may practice alongside each other in the same facility or field but must operate distinctly from each other during any competitive drills. No Game like scenarios should take place across (or mixing) any age ranges.

3.9 Each age range should be supervised by dedicated, registered, coaches who are shown on the appropriate team roster.

3.10 It is the responsibility of club management to make sure that age ranges are appropriately supervised by coaches and are not mixed during practice session. Failure to do so may result in penalties which could include, but are not limited to fines and suspension of membership for club management and coaches involved.

3.11 Where there are female players, it is advised that players should not take part in fixtures in any National Leagues competition when knowingly pregnant.

3.12 Players or coaches with specific medical conditions should seek the advice and guidance of a General Practitioner or other suitably qualified individual as to whether they should take part in the sport. It is recommended that all participants are subject to a health check prior to participation.

3.13 No restriction shall be applied to registration or play within the competitions by nationality. However, the Competition Management reserves the right to review this rule at any time for the purposes of ensuring the intended development of the Competitions.

3.14 All coaches are required to be a minimum of 18 years of age and have passed a minimum of BAFA Coaching Level 1 qualification or Leaders Award (for Flag football activity) and be able to provide evidence of sufficient, current liability insurance specific to coaching American football (sufficient shall mean equivalent to the BAFA coach insurance policy as a minimum if this option is not chosen).

3.15 Where there is a crossover of ages from young person to adult the BAFA Welfare Guidance should be read to ensure that issues related to minors and vulnerable adults are assessed and addressed.

#### **4. TEAM REGISTRATION**

4.1 Clubs must notify the Competition Management of their intent to enter teams into the respective competitions, and register the team on the Registration system, no later than 1 November 2018 for youth, junior and adult contact and cadet, youth and adult flag teams (or such alternative date as may be specified by Competition Management). Women's Opal and Sapphire teams will be advised of the appropriate dates to submit their intent to participate by Competition Management. Failure to register on time will result in teams being placed into the Associate level for the coming season.

4.2 Club Management of adult contact teams must advise Competition Management of their provisional Home Ground availability by 4pm on 5 November to allow for the preparation of a provisional schedule. A minimum of seven dates for home fixtures and seven away dates must be submitted for consideration.

4.3 Regular roster 'health checks' will be conducted by Competition Management and Registrations Management for each participating National Leagues team to ensure numbers are sustainable and that each team has the required number of coaches and players to be considered for schedule addition. These will take place prior to scheduling for all levels. Minimum number requirements and cut-off dates will be notified by Competition Management from time-to-time as appropriate.

4.4 For Clubs that have an A and B team, or two teams participating within the same discipline, such as two youth contact teams, players may move between the two teams during pre-season. All players must be registered to the team they will compete in prior to the start of that competition's season. Players must then remain registered within that team unless the movement is approved by Registrations Management and Competition Management.

4.5 As part of registering their team, clubs are requested to upload copies of the following documentation:

- Constitution
- Summary of most recent annual accounts

- Codes of conduct (sample copy)
  - Player agreement / contract (sample copy only)
  - Child protection policy (if appropriate)
  - Club Admin non-disclosure agreement
- (Note: this will be mandatory for 2019 season onwards)

This can be done within the club details sections of the National Leagues registration system provided by GoMembership!

4.6 As part of registering their teams, clubs are requested to enter information about home and away jerseys and contact details, including head coach, for each of their teams. This can be done in the team profile sections of the National Leagues registration system provided by GoMembership!

## 5. REGISTRATION OF MEMBERS

5.1 As per Regulation 3.5 all players, coaches, club administrators and staff who will be present at gamedays and tournaments must be members of the British American Football Association and possess Governing Body approved insurance (purchased along with membership).

5.2 Membership is achieved by registering and paying for a membership on the British American Football Association's National Leagues registration system provided by GoMembership! In the unlikely event of a technology issue preventing the purchase of membership, temporary membership may be granted on request, by submitting member details to Registrations Management.

Temporary membership is only confirmed once the submission is acknowledged as being valid.

Note: Creation of a second membership profile is a disciplinary offence.

5.3 All new players at all age groups and disciplines are entitled to three trial sessions with a team. After this point they must register and pay for a BAFA membership in order to be covered by BAFA injury and liability insurance. **A new player is a player new to the sport. A player for example transferring between clubs, or a player returning to the sport, is not to be treated as a new player.** This is required in order to be eligible to practice or play with their team. Any players who participate in kitted or unknitted team practice sessions after this point without registering are not covered by BAFA injury or liability insurance, and their participation may impact on the insurance of all others present. It is the responsibility of Club Management to ensure that all players, coaches and sideline staff are registered, and thus insured, to practice as well as take part in games or tournaments. Any avoidance of this responsibility will be taken extremely seriously by Registration Management and Competition Management. Clubs suspected of allowing unregistered players, coaches or other sideline staff to participate in training sessions without BAFA membership may be investigated. In the event of an investigation conclude that unregistered players, coaches or other side line staff were knowingly allowed to participate in team practices unregistered, penalties could, but may not be limited to, fines and suspension of membership for clubmanagement.

5.4 All membership costs are listed on the National Leagues registration system provided by Go Membership! and also on the BAFA website.

5.5 Players who wish to play National Leagues Contact and National Leagues Flag will be required to pay an additional £5 competition fee. To do so they must first purchase a contact licence on the National Leagues registration system. They will then be able to access the upgrade function to pay for their additional £5 competition fee. Once the competition fee is purchased, players should contact Registrations Management to have the correct flag licence for their age group added to their profile.

5.6 Players who wish to play in the Opal Series and the Sapphire series will be required to pay an additional £25 competition fee. To do so they must first purchase an Opal licence on the National Leagues registration system. They will then be able to access the upgrade function to pay for their additional £25 Sapphire Licence. Once the competition fee is purchased, players should contact Registrations Management to have the Sapphire licence for added to their profile.

5.7 All teams must be in possession of both an official British American Football Association photo roster and a GDPR roster not including photos for each game day. Only players, coaches and staff members listed on both rosters are eligible for activity and are authorised to be within the playing area as defined within BAFA rules on game day unless there is written approval from a designated officer of the British American Football Association, or its nominee(s). (Exception, 3<sup>rd</sup> party Medical Game Daycover).

5.8 Rosters can be updated each week. A new addition to the roster must be added by 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to a fixture. The following exceptions apply:

5.8.1 Where the addition is a transfer, the request must be made via the National Leagues registration system provided by GoMembership! and must be approved by the club the member is leaving as well as the club the member is joining by 22:00 hours on the Tuesday prior to scheduled fixture. It is the members responsibility to submit their own transfer request. Transfers are not required between teams within the same club or from University League teams.

5.8.2 Where a player, coach or other club staff member is returning from a period of absence from registration to a team which was their last team they were a member of then they are eligible to sign for that team until 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to the last week of the regular season (according to the pre-season schedule for the relevant discipline and age bracket)

5.8.3 Teams are able to sign players, coaches or other club staff members who have never previously registered with a club which falls under the auspices of the British American Football Association or the International Federation of American Football through until 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to the last week of the regular season (according to the pre-season schedule for the relevant discipline and age bracket)

5.8.4 Players, coaches or other club staff member who have been registered with the University Football league competitions may sign up until 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to the last week of the regular season (according to the pre-season schedule for the relevant discipline and age bracket)

5.9 Each team, via their designated Club Administrator, must have downloaded a copy of their most recent roster by 19:00 hours on the Friday prior to a fixture. You will not be able to download a copy of the roster from the Registration System after this time. Issues with rosters must be notified to the Registrations Management no later than 20:00 hours on the Friday prior to a game.

5.10 A check of identity of players against the game roster form is mandatory prior to every Official Game. This may be done either inside or outside but bad weather is not an acceptable reason for it being omitted. If there are any discrepancies these should be notified to the Officials and the Head Coaches at the earliest opportunity. The Referee (or in lieu of BAFRA officials, the Head Coaches) will note the complaints and send a report to the Competition Management. Teams should contact the Competition Management and Registrations Management with any complaint in writing. Failure to conduct a thorough card check is a disciplinary offence. Rosters should be signed by game day management and your opponent and retained by Club Management. Competition Management reserve the right to request a copy of a gameday roster at any point and may require this to be submitted as supporting evidence in the event of a dispute.

5.11 Any player, coach or other club staff member not showing on the roster, or who is not easily identifiable by their roster photo is ineligible to be present within the team area for that game or

tournament unless permission has been granted by a member of the Competition Management or Registrations Management. It is the Club Administrators responsibility to ensure that all members photos are correct as per BAFA registration rule 5.21.

5.12 Roster discrepancies must be recorded and details sent directly to the Registrations Management. All evidence must be supplied within 7 days of the game and resolved under the appeals procedure.

5.13 Before each game, each team must supply the Referee with a non-photo GDPR compliant roster form complete with numbered players. An example of this can be found on the British American Football Association website.

5.14 A player, coach or other club staff member may not be eligible or active on a roster for a team in the following circumstances:

5.14.1 They have not followed the transfer process as stipulated

5.14.2 They are under ban or suspension as a result of disciplinary action.

5.14.3 Incorrect registration procedure has been carried out.

5.14.4 They owe equipment or money to another team in any BAFA National League organisation or to BAFA.

5.14.5 They are currently subject to a ban, suspension, or period of ineligibility from a governing body of another sport for a violation that would have been contrary to BAFA's own rules and regulations.

5.14.6 They do not meet the age eligibility requirements.

5.15 Any team playing an ineligible player or using an unregistered coach in an official game will face disciplinary action against its management and coaching staff, unless this has arisen solely from an error by the Competition Management.

5.16 Any player playing in an official game for a team when they are not eligible will face disciplinary action unless this has arisen solely from an error by the Competition Management.

5.17 Disciplinary action in respect of sections 5.15 and 5.16 will be severe and will include:

5.17.1 A club fine of £100 for the first offence.

5.17.2 A one game suspension for the individual in question, the Head coach and designated team administrator.

5.17.3 A loss of 1-0 in the fixture.

**A secondary offence will result in further fines and/or the team being withdrawn from the competition.**

5.18 Each member over 16 years old is responsible for completing their own registration. This must not be completed on their behalf by any other person unless expressly authorized by Registrations Management or Competition Management. It shall be a disciplinary offence (for both the individual and/or the person/club who completed the registration on the individual's behalf) for someone to complete the registration on behalf of an individual. The person registering must ensure that all information supplied is true and accurate.

5.19 Members under 16 years of age must be registered by a parent or legal guardian, this is to bring BAFA registration practices in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which has specific protections for children by limiting their ability to consent to data processing without parental authorization.

5.20 It is the Club Administrator's responsibility to ensure that all players and coaches registered on the National Leagues registration system have clear roster photos as defined in 5.21 and are eligible to register.

5.21 Profile photos uploaded onto the National Leagues registration system are used to create photo rosters so must be clear and the member must be instantly recognisable. Photos should be a clear head and shoulders, passport style picture. Members should not be wearing helmets, hats, sunglasses or anything else that can obscure their head/ face (this includes eye black). Photos must be of the individual being registered and must not be altered or have filters added in any way.

5.22 Should a roster photo be deemed unacceptable by either competing team during a roster check at a gameday or tournament, a complaint must be raised with the game day officials and Registration Management within 24 hours so the issue can be investigated. Should a team insist on fielding a player with a photo deemed unacceptable, the game result could be overturned or the club fined should Competition and Registration Management agree that is unacceptable following further investigation.

5.23 Regular spot checks of roster photos will be undertaken by the National Leagues Registration Management (or appointed representative). In the event that any roster photo is deemed unsuitable, club administrators will be notified and will have five working days to make sure a suitable replacement photo is uploaded. Should the original, unacceptable, photo remain after this time then a fine will be imposed and the membership licence of the individual concerned will be suspended until the fine is paid and the photo meets the standards required.

5.24 All members must confirm their identity by uploading one form of photo ID and a supporting proof of address into the National Leagues registration system. Acceptable forms of ID include but are not limited to:

- Passport
- Drivers License
- University or college ID card
- Military ID card
- Recognized national identity or proof of age cards such as Young Scot, CitizenCard and Validate UK
- Utility bill
- Bank, building society or credit card bill

5.25 It is recognised that minors/serving military personnel may not hold suitable photo or proof of address ID. For under 18s, a birth certificate and proof of address in a parent's name showing the same address as the player is registered against are acceptable alternatives.

- Registration Management reserve the right to accept or decline any other forms of identification submitted, on a case-by-case basis.

5.26 Individuals applying for BAFA must be able to produce proof of normal residency in the UK normal residency is defined by our insurers as 6 months in the UK with permission to stay. Exceptions include those resident in the UK on military assignments and students on a valid and current Tier 4 Visa. Other individuals not normally resident in the UK will only be granted membership by exception and with permission granted by Competition and Registrations management.

5.26 Players and coaches whose eligibility is in doubt should be highlighted to the Registration Management.

5.27 The Competition Management may from time to time request information from Members regarding the details they have submitted on their membership forms. Failure to supply information when requested could result in disciplinary action and suspension of membership.

5.28 The registration system will require proof of residency from foreign nationals - examples (not exhaustive) of the suitable documentation are :-

- a) Passport with a valid visa which provides for UK residency
- b) British Driving Licence
- c) A valid residency permit
- d) Proof of nationality which permits residency in the UK and documentation showing proof of 6 months residency
- e) A valid and current documentation proving that one of the two exceptions apply ; and
- f) any other documentation approved by BAFA Registrations

5.29 For Age Group players who may not personally have the required documentation copies of a parent/guardians documentation will be accepted.

## **6. TRANSFERS**

6.1 Subject to proving that they are free of financial liability or subject to disciplinary action at their team of prior registration or the Governing Body and its partner organisations, a player, coach or other club staff member, is free to request a transfer to join another team registered with the British American Football Association from October 1 up until transfer deadline day, this being first Tuesday of July.

6.2 Transfer requests must be submitted via the National Leagues registration system and must be approved by both the leaving and receiving clubs by 22:00 hours on the Tuesday prior to the next scheduled fixture to be eligible for that game. Transfers not completed by the specified deadline will be actioned the following week. It is the member's own responsibility to submit their transfer request in the National Leagues registration system.

6.3 Club admin have seven working days to acknowledge or reject/approve any transfer requests from members wishing to leave their club. Should there be no response from Club Admin the Registrations Management will approve the transfer on their behalf within 24hours.

6.4 Unless approved by Competitions Management, members are only allowed two transfers per competition season.

6.5 An individual can only belong to one National Leagues club at any one time. However, subject to the agreement of representatives of Club Management from both organisations and the approval of Registrations Management, a player, coach or club member in another capacity, is permitted to join another club registered with the British American Football Association for one of the following reasons:

6.5.1 To coach a youth or junior team, where no such age bracketed team exists in the same discipline in their primary club

6.5.2 To play for another team where no such discipline or age bracketed team exists in their primary club – for example, to play for an adult flag team when already registered with a club that does not offer this discipline, or to play for an adult contact team when already registered with another club for women's Opal or Sapphire competitions, where no adult contact team exists.

*Individuals who wish to belong to more than one club should contact Registrations Management to discuss whether they meet the criteria to belong to two clubs.*

6.6 Individuals are not permitted to hold club administration privileges on the National Leagues registration system for more than one club.

6.7 Permission to belong to two clubs is at the absolute discretion of National Leagues management, and is primarily intended to benefit the further growth of youth, junior and flag football, and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis for each season. Permission will be withdrawn and reviewed should there be any suggestion the permission is being abused (for example, to attempt to play for two adult contact teams in the same season, avoid transfer rules or with the sole purpose of recruiting players for their home club)

6.8 All teams should ensure that any agreement entered into between the team and an individual with respect to fees, equipment loans and other such relations should reflect the dates pertaining to the end of the season. The British American Football Association, should it be called to review a case, does not endorse or recognise agreements which exist on a multi-season basis.

6.9 Restrictions on participation will also exist for emerging (Associate) teams. In order to demonstrate sustainability emerging teams will be allowed to register players who were registered to a team in the previous season. These however, cannot form part of a stipulated minimum number of players which is required to demonstrate a core level of potential sustainability. This rule will not apply to players who have graduated from a Junior or Youth team which forms part of a wider club structure that the adult team may be part of, nor does it apply to players who may have progressed from other Junior or Youth teams where there is no adult team which players can progress into which forms part of a wider 'club'.

6.10 The deadline for transfers of members (players, coaches or other club staff members) between teams competing in the domestic competitions or from abroad is 22:00 hours on the first Tuesday of July of that year. All clubs involved in the transfer must have approved and completed by this time.

6.11 Without prejudice to the generality of the appropriate sections in these Regulations in the case of a dispute concerning a player and amounts owed to, or commitments to, previous teams the following shall be the procedure:

6.11.1 Where a dispute arises registration can be withheld for 72 hours following a receipt of the registration request. The team wishing to register the player, the team claiming that the player owes equipment or money and the player concerned shall be entitled to make a written submission to the Transfer Manager as the circumstances of the case.

6.11.2 During the period specified in 6.11.1 above (or otherwise stated by the Competition Management) the parties concerned shall meet (electronically if necessary) and attempt to resolve the situation.

6.11.3 If at the end of the period referred to in 6.11.1 above no conclusion has been reached then the Competition Management shall arbitrate upon the payment of a non-returnable fee of £25 from each team and deliver its decision within a further 48 hours.

6.11.4 Regardless of the rights and wrongs of the case the fee referred to in 6.11.3. shall not be transferred or charged to any person other than those specified i.e. no matter who is right or wrong £25 non returnable fee has to be paid by the team wishing to register the player and the team(s) objecting to registration.

6.11.5 The decision of the Competition Management shall be final.

6.12 All players and coaches seeking to transfer to a British team from a foreign team or vice versa, must complete an official IFAF International Transfer form. These forms can be requested from the National Leagues Registrations Management and are available on the BAFA website.

6.13 Due to the nature of International Transfers, once cleared, a player or coach has until 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to a game to register.

6.14 Players or coaches must not register with a National League team until their International Transfer has been completed and approved by the International Transfer Coordinator and Registrations Management.

6.15 Players, coaches and staff must go through the correct transfer process if moving clubs and should NOT set up a new, additional profile to register if they have previously been part of another club. It is Club Admin responsibility to ensure that this rule is upheld. If someone joining your club has previously belonged to another BAFA club before 2012, pre-dating the online registration system, please email [registrations@britishamericanfootball.org](mailto:registrations@britishamericanfootball.org) for guidance.

## **7. COMPETITION STRUCTURE AND PLAYOFFS**

7.1 The National Leagues will be comprised of competitions which have differing categories & formats as determined by the British American Football Association.

7.2 Below describes the different categories for each of the following competitions:

### 7.2.1 Adult Contact

11v11 format, of three tiers which are also split geographically north and south.

### 7.2.2 Junior Contact

9v9 format and 7v7 format organised by the Age Group Commission Lead.

### 7.2.3 Youth Contact

5v5 Format, split geographically in regional tournament structure

### 7.2.3 Adult Flag

5v5 Format, split geographically in regional tournament structure

### 7.2.4 Youth Flag up to age 16

5v5 Format, split geographically in regional tournament structure

### 7.2.5 Opal

5v5 Format, split geographically in regional tournament structure

### 7.2.6 Sapphire

7v7 of two tiers which are also split geographically north and south

### 7.2.7 Cadet Flag

5v5 Format, split geographically in regional tournament structure

7.3 The Format has their competitions conferences set out by BAFA National Leagues management committees.

7.4 The playoff format for contact and flag football is as below. For players and coaches to be eligible then they must have followed the below timescales for registering:

7.4.1 Players or coaches transferring (either domestic or international) must have signed by the deadline is as outlined in Section 6.10

7.4.2 Players or coaches new to the sport (i.e. have never been involved in playing under BAFA or an international federation the deadline is 17:00 on the Friday prior to the last week of the

regular season (according to the pre-season schedule for the relevant discipline and age bracket)

7.4.3 Where a player, coach or other club staff member is returning from a period of absence from registration to a team which was their last team they were a member of then they are eligible to sign for that team until 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to the last week of the regular season (according to the pre-season schedule for the relevant discipline and age bracket)

7.4.4 Players, coaches or other club staff member who have been registered with the University Football league competitions may sign up until 17:00 hours on the Friday prior to the last week of the regular season (according to the pre-season schedule for the relevant discipline and age bracket)

7.5 Each Category and format will receive the League structure by 18 November 2018, indicating overall league dates and playoff structure (which will also include dates of competition) This is set or approved by BAFA NL Management committee/Director of Competitions

7.6 In order to rank teams the following tie breakers will be used

7.6.1 Won/Loss/Tied record

7.6.2 Head to Head points differential during regular season (when two teams tied on same W/L/T record)

7.6.3 Lowest Average points conceded in games played (Excludes awarded games)

7.6.4 Highest Won/Loss/Tied record for scheduled away games

7.6.5 Lowest number of players ejected

7.6.6 A coin toss by the Competition Management

7.7 If three or more teams are tied on final W/L/T, then follow the tie breakers until a team is excluded. The tie breakers will then restart tie breakers for remaining teams. The same tie-breakers are applicable for ranking teams threatened with relegation. The team with the superior performance remains in the division, or is awarded a place in the play offs, as the case may be.

## **8. COMPETITION PROPERTIES**

8.1 All rights and properties associated with it are owned, controlled and managed by the British American Football Association.

8.2 Permission must be sought from the Competition Management should any team seek to have their fixtures broadcast (either via visual or audio means). All broadcasters must comply with the terms and conditions laid down by the Governing Body. The Governing Body may elect to broadcast any play off game or finals game or any particular league game by, in the case of a league game or a play off game, notifying the home team at least 28 days (or 7 days in the case of a play off game) prior to the scheduled date for such game. In the event that the Governing Body selects a particular game for broadcasting, then the home team shall provide such assistance and/or cooperation for the broadcasting of the game as the Governing Body may reasonably require.

8.3 Teams may not attach monikers to official competition games without the approval of the Competition Management. This encompasses sponsor names and any other title.

8.4 In maintaining copies of fixtures, results and tables on team websites or any other form of publication, teams must use the full titles and correct signage (if used) of the competition (incorporating sponsor names where appropriate).

8.5 Teams failing to comply with the above will face a fine of £500.

## **9 FIXTURE ARRANGEMENTS**

9.1 The schedules for all Official Games shall have a centrally managed fixture calendar. Where changes to this calendar need to be made, approval must be sought and given by the relevant Competition Management.

9.2 Games will be played on fields, in venues and with appropriate support provision which meets the minimum standards as laid out below and by the Governing Body in the BAFA Rule Book unless otherwise agreed by the Competition Management.

9.3 Unless otherwise stated by the Competition Management, the team considered the 'home' team in all single fixture games or the 'host' team in all tournament format event, shall be responsible for meeting the standards of Game Day Management as laid down in the BAFA Rule Book.

9.4 The designated home team or host team have first choice of uniform colour for Official Games or tournaments.

9.5 It is the responsibility of the home or host team's Game Day Management to conduct a risk assessment for their game day facility.

9.6 The Home Team or Host Team shall notify the Away Team(s) of the following, no later than noon of the Tuesday prior to Game Day for a weekend game or tournament, or five working days for a weekday game or tournament:

9.6.1 Nature of the field surface upon which the game is to be played (e.g. grass, artificial turf, etc.).

9.6.2 Length of field (e.g. 100 yards or 90 yards) and any unusual aspects to it or its surrounds.

9.6.3 Description of venue including car parking, coach parking, seating arrangements etc

9.6.4 Price of admission, if applicable.

9.6.5 Nature of changing facilities including those for female members of the team and Cheerleaders.

9.6.6 Address of and directions to venue including location map.

9.7 Changes to any of the above should be notified to the Competition Management, BAFRA Operations Staff and affected teams as soon as the change is known.

## **10. GAME DAY MANAGEMENT**

10.1 Game Management shall be the home or host team's responsibility except for Trophy Games or others as specified by the Competition Management where teams will be relieved of the responsibility which will be undertaken by the Competition Management or its chosen agent.

10.2 Game Management shall ensure that all games or tournaments are played in accordance with the administrative rules set out in the BAFA Rule book. Teams are encouraged to meet the standards specified by rule wherever possible and if there are issues faced, the Competition Management should be notified of any issues at the earliest possible opportunity.

10.4 Game Management shall do everything necessary and supply everything necessary, whether or not specifically stated in these Regulations or Game Rules, to ensure that the game or tournament takes place and is satisfactorily concluded (subject to matters being carried out by others where specifically designated in these Regulations or in the Game Rules as being the responsibility of others).

10.5 All teams shall designate a Head Coach to the referees. If a team has joint Head Coaches, they must designate one as having final responsibility for team discipline and adherence to all rules, regulations and ethical issues pertaining to the role of the HeadCoach.

10.6 Any team that does not have a Head Coach who fulfils all the requirements contained within these Regulations shall forfeit all games until such time as these obligations are fulfilled.

10.7 Where there is a contravention of these Regulations concerning Game Management or of the BAFA Game Rules the Referees / Game Officials are entitled to find, and so decide, that the game or tournament can take place and it will be for the Competition Management to adjudicate on the effect and seriousness of the infraction, its affect on the likely outcome of the game or tournament and the disciplinary action to be taken and the penalties imposed.

10.8 The Referee and the Away Team shall report all breaches of mandatory game management rules to the Competition Management within 48 hours of the game or tournament.

10.9 The Referee shall be sole arbiter in respect of decisions as to whether to cancel, delay, suspend or abandon the game or tournament. In games without BAFRA (BAFA-recognised officials) officials, the responsibility lays with the two Head Coaches and / or (in the case of facility issues) the groundskeeper. The Competition Management reserves the right to review all decisions made to preserve the integrity of the competition. Non-BAFRA officials are required to carry out a pre-game Health and Safety check of the field and its surrounds. This must be returned (either by post or scanned and via email) to the Competition Management. It is incumbent upon Game Management to carry out the instructions of and to follow the procedures laid down by Referee and Officials.

10.10 Whatever the circumstances, the maximum delay permissible in kick-off time at the commencement of the game or tournament is 1 hour (60 minutes) unless both teams (if present) and the Referee (if present) shall unanimously agree to an extension of time, at which time the extension shall be specified as a period of time.

10.11 Whatever the circumstances, the maximum period of suspension of the game or tournament, after the kickoff at the commencement of the game or tournament, is one hour unless both teams and the Referee (if present) shall unanimously agree to an extension of time, at which time the extension shall be specified as a period of time.

10.12 The Competition Management reserves the right to investigate the circumstances of every game or tournament and take appropriate action.

10.13 The Competition Management shall impose sanctions on teams that breach game management rules. Such sanctions shall be at the discretion of the Competition Management and may include warnings, fines, and restrictions on the use of a venue, cancellation of games or tournaments, the award of a game or the forfeiting of the right to playoff football.

10.14 As stated in section 9.1 it is the responsibility of the home or host team to ensure that Management standards are met. This includes meeting standards and requirements laid down by the respective Competition Management groups.

10.15 Competition Management may from time to time arrange for a representative to attend a game to ensure minimum standards are being met.

## **11. INCIDENT RECORDING AND REPORTING**

11.1 For all 'incidents' on or off the field at the designated venue for training or fixtures teams must complete an Incident Report Form (as per the guidance in the Welfare Section of the Governing Body website) which will be stored for insurance purposes.

11.2 If an accident occurs during team activity where a player, coach, spectator or staff member is injured, the accident reporting procedure should be followed as detailed in the Welfare Section of the Governing Body website.

*This procedure should be followed for ALL injuries and accidents, regardless of whether or not medical treatment is given.*

11.3 All clubs should have the following information for each player at every game:

11.3.1 Any specific medical information which would be useful to the emergency services in the event of necessary treatment

11.3.2 Contact details of next of kin and/or one other contact in case of emergency or assistance required. This can be downloaded by a club administrator from the reports section of the club area in the National Leagues registrationsystem.

## **12. OFFICIALS AND SIDE LINE STAFF**

12.1 BAFRA officials are appointed in line with the Terms and Conditions outlined on their company website [www.bafra.info](http://www.bafra.info) These also outline payment terms.

12.2 If a BAFRA Officials Crew has been assigned to the game or tournament and do not turn-up the game or tournament will be postponed unless both Head Coaches agree to the game or tournament taking place. If no officials are available for the game or tournament and the team has been notified of this at least three days in advance then the teams must make provision for the game to be officiated by current coaches.

12.3 The game or games within a tournament must be refereed by three BAFCA Level 1 (or above) qualified coaches (for 11 vs 11 or two for smaller sided contact variants and one for Flag football) who have coaching insurance, has undertaken the field audit and has undertaken the reading of the rules of the game and the BAFCA Guide to Self Officiating – the Rules are available as a download from the Governing Bodywebsite.

12.4 It is the Home or Host Team's duty to provide the three officials but the visiting team shall have the right to provide the second official if notified to the home team prior to the commencement of the game (see BAFCA Guide to Self Officiating)

12.5 In situations where it is known there will be no officials for the game or tournament, the home team must notify the Competition Management at least two days before the game or tournament is to take place of the coach who is to be thereferee.

12.6 If BAFRA Officials fail to turn-up on the day, the home team must notify the Competition Management or a member of the BAFRA Operations team of the situation and the name of the coach who will be officiating before the game or tournament can begin. If this cannot be achieved then the game must be abandoned. Coaches officiating games will have the full powers of regular officials and must be treated with equal respect.

12.7 If a BAFRA crew arrive and deem the game unplayable due to the conditions then the game or tournament must not take place on that field for the remainder of the day. Alternative fields can be sought and approved by either the officials and / or the CompetitionManagement.

12.8 The Home Team shall provide three people for the chain crew and at least one ball person. If a team does not have sufficient people to man these tasks they must remove players from the playing squad to cover this.

12.9 Fresh drinking water must be made available to all players, officials and sideline staff.

### 13. GAME SCHEDULING

13.1 The Competition Management for each discipline shall allocate each team a set number of regular season fixtures, to be played on a home and away or tournament basis, unless otherwise prescribed.

13.2 The Competition Management shall determine the schedule for playoff games.

13.3 Unless otherwise specified, games will be played on Saturdays or Sundays with Sunday considered the primary day for Adult Contact and Junior Contact fixtures.

13.4 Kick off Time shall be the following, unless otherwise notified to the teams by the Competition Management and relevant third parties (i.e. referees / medical staff) and as agreed between all teams participating.

13.4.1 Adult contact - between 12:00 noon and 16:00pm on a Sunday for all adult fixtures.

13.4.2 Junior contact – between 12:00 noon and 14:30pm on a Sunday for standalone junior games. For games with adult double-header attachments, kick-off should be agreed between all teams involved and the Competition Management and should be no earlier than 12 noon and no later than 16.00pm. Game management are strongly encouraged to consider the travelling time of visiting junior teams and take this into account when planning and setting kick off times for double-headers. Competition Management has final approval on kick off times for junior / adult double headers.

13.4.3 Youth contact - 13.00pm on a Saturday for all youth tournament fixtures unless otherwise notified to the teams by the Competition Management and relevant third parties (i.e. referees / medical staff) and as agreed between all teams participating.

13.4.4 Adult flag shall normally be played on a Saturday – timing to be advised by Competition Management

13.4.5 Cadet and Youth flag shall normally be played on a Saturday - timing to be advised by Competition Management (but provided that the kick off time for the first game should not require an away team to leave their home venue prior to 7am for an arrival at the venue at least one hour before kick off)

13.4.6 Opal and Sapphire shall normally be played on a Saturday - timing to be advised by Competition Management

13.5 Playing time shall be determined as per the Rules. Competition Management may determine that games can be according to a different playing time.

13.6 If both teams involved agree, they may re-schedule any regular season game or tournament so long as the Competition Management shall give its consent and that there is sufficient time between the start of one fixture and the start of another (as per the BAFA Rules). Competition Management must be informed of any re-schedule requests no later than 72 hours prior to kickoff.

13.7 If it is agreed by both teams that a game or tournament is to be re-scheduled, the proposed new date must be submitted for approval to the Competition Management within 14 days of the abandoned game. Should there be no agreement, the Competition management reserve the right to award the game/s.

13.8 If both teams involved agree, they may re-schedule any Play-off game or tournament so long as the Competition Management shall give its consent and that there is sufficient time between the start of one fixture and the start of another (as per the BAFA Rules).

13.9 If the Competition Management does not give written consent to a change of date or location of a game or tournament then the originally scheduled date and location remains in force.

13.10 Scheduling problems must be brought to the attention of the Competition Management at the earliest possible time. Failure to do so may result in the game or tournament not being played and the rules on unplayed games enforced.

13.11 All teams must be available to participate in games or tournaments on all weeks of the regular season unless specifically exempted by the Competition Management prior to week one of the regular season. There are restrictions on games or tournament taking place on certain weekends. No games or tournaments may be scheduled on the same weekend as the Coaches' Convention and approval is required for games or tournaments taking place on National Team training or game weekends.

13.12 Any games or tournaments contested against foreign opposition by a member must have prior approval from the Competition Management.

13.13 The regular playing season shall be determined by the Competition Management, but shall normally run from April through to September for youth, junior and adult contact and cadet, youth and adult flag. Women's Opal and Sapphire competition playing seasons will be advised by competition management.

13.14 Playoffs for all disciplines will usually consist of teams from each Division going through to a knock-out format culminating in the Championship Game and a Divisional Final. The format for the Play Offs is contained in Section 7.

13.15 All teams entering Playoff competition are required to provide full team rosters and narrative for the Championship Programme at the start of the playoffs. Failure to do so may result in a fine to recover any costs incurred in the production of the Championship Programme.

13.16 Teams may not voluntarily cancel fixtures except in circumstances beyond their control, reasonably unavoidable and where evidence of 'beyond control' can be provided. Circumstances beyond a teams control include, but are not limited to:

13.16.1 'Act of Nature' – events outside of human control such as floods, other extreme bad weather or natural disasters.

13.16.2 Major incident that requires the implementation of special arrangements by one or more of the Emergency Services, the NHS or local authority for the initial treatment, rescue and transport of a large number of casualties.

13.16.3 Venue booking cancellation within 72 hours for games or within 5 days for tournaments

**Circumstances considered within a team's control include, but not limited to:**

13.16.5 Player unavailability due to holidays or social events.

13.16.6 Insufficient player numbers to provide cover for injured team members due to lack of depth at specific positions such as Offensive and Defensive line.

13.16.7 Lack of player numbers overall.

13.16.8 Failure to book an ambulance.

13.16.9 Failure to book referees.

13.16.10 Insufficient funds to cover travelling expenses.

13.16.11 Venue booking issues with more than 72 hour notice for games or 5 days for tournaments.

13.16.12 Insufficient coaches to be able to self officiate, where required to do so, or being unable or unwilling to self officiate for any other reason.

**13.17** Any requests for cancellations must be submitted to the Competitions management for consideration no later than 72 hours prior to kick off for games, or by 22:00 hours on the Tuesday prior to kick off for tournaments. Exceptions to this rule include, but are not limited to sections 13.16.1 through to 13.16.3 due to the nature of the cancellation request.

13.18 If a fixture is not fulfilled either because of cancellation by one or both Teams, or the default of one or both Teams, or by cancellation or abandonment by the Referee, or exceptionally in the event of intervention by the Competition Management, or in any other event, then the Competition Management shall at their discretion and taking into account such reasons or evidence as it shall consider relevant, decide whether to reschedule the fixture (or permit its rescheduling by the Teams) or may at its discretion settle the result of such unfulfilled fixture and may take such disciplinary action as it deems appropriate.

13.19 If a team forfeits a game (or in the case of a format of the game which plays a tournament format, a tournament) (voluntarily or due to any reason deemed by competition management to be within their control (as outlined in rule 13.16), they will be awarded a yellow card. If this team is in the top two tiers of the adult football league structure this will result in automatic relegation at the end of the season. Any team incurring two yellow cards in a rolling 24- month period will be placed back into the associate process for their level of football for the following season.

13.20 Any costs incurred or loss of revenue as a result of a cancelled fixture will be determined by the Competition Management in consultation with the respective Teams. Core costs which will primarily be considered will be travel costs, game field and changing facilities hire (which may, in the case of a tournament being cancelled, include any costs incurred by a team in hosting the tournament at an alternative venue) and medical provision. In the case of a Referees cancellation or non-attendance at a game the costs incurred will be sought from BAFRA via the Competition Management. All details relating to costs incurred or loss of revenue must be substantiated by submission of appropriate receipts and invoices.

13.21 Where revenue loss is speculated the Competition Management will only consider amounts when provided with financial details relating to the three preceding fixtures for the team claiming.

13.22 The Competition Management will not be responsible for any of these costs nor will it be responsible for any loss of revenue or costs as a result of teams folding or leaving the League.

13.23 Teams will be permitted to request a rescheduled fixture should they have three or more individuals involved in a BAFA sanctioned international representative fixture which coincides with a league game weekend. The individuals must be involved in either a playing or coaching capacity and appear on the official roster submitted to the international federation.

13.24 Teams should inform the Competition Management of all games they propose to play additionally to official games, whether these are against other League members or otherwise including post season friendlies, tournaments or tours. The Governing Body has the right of sanction on any game involving international opponents.

13.25 Fixtures not played by the last week of the regular season will be deemed either 0-0 ties or 1-0 awarded games for the purposes of identifying playoff contenders and positions. All awards will be made at the conclusion of the regular season (unless awarded earlier at the sole discretion of the Competition Management).

13.26 A visiting team that, without reasonable excuse, fails to show up for a game or tournament, or cancels a game may incur any or all of the following:

13.26.1 Forfeit the game or any games within a tournament 1-0; and

13.26.2 Pay fees incurred for the game or a share thereof for a tournament;

13.26.3 Be considered to be ineligible for the playoffs

13.26.4 Be subject to review against wider Rules and Regulations should they be applicable

13.27 A home team that, without reasonable excuse, fails to show up for a game or tournament, or that cancels a game or tournament for any reason within its own control may incur any or all of the following:

13.27.1 Forfeit the game or any games within a tournament 1-0; and

13.27.2 Pay all fees incurred by the travelling team;

13.27.3 Be considered to be ineligible for the playoffs.

13.27.4 Be subject to review against wider Rules and Regulations should they be applicable

13.28 If a fixture is not played for reasons beyond the control of either team then the game or tournament shall not be awarded but, at the discretion of the Competition Management, rescheduled or deemed a tie. Player and coach availability (subject to international fixtures) is deemed within the control of the team or club.

13.29 If a team incurs a Yellow Card for forfeiting a game they will no longer be eligible for the play offs in that competition year.

13.30 The venue for a rescheduled match shall be the choice of the home team, unless:

13.30.1 The visiting team has travelled, in which case it will be the choice of the visiting team,  
OR

13.30.2 the visiting team has incurred the cost of travel, in which case the home team will have the opportunity to reimburse the visiting team within one week, to retain their option of venue, otherwise the visiting team will have the choice.

13.31 All rescheduled fixtures must be approved by the Competition Management (see 13.6 and 13.7)

13.32 Any games or tournaments which are postponed for reasons beyond either team's control, or which cannot be rescheduled safely will be recorded as a 0-0 tie or have no result allocated.

13.33 Teams that forfeit one or more games or tournaments may, at the discretion of the Competition Management, have to pay the League a surety of £500 that they will complete their next season, in which event the surety will be returned to the team. If a team forfeits a game or tournament the team will not be eligible for progression to the play-offs. The League will also consider whether games or tournaments have been forfeited to try and gain an unfair advantage for the offending team i.e. fewer points conceded.

13.34 In the event that it is not possible to play a playoff game or playoff game within a tournament due to circumstances beyond the control of both teams, the winner shall be decided by the following procedure:

13.34.1 Competitive record for both teams when facing each other during the season based upon win / loss / tied record and subject to that being equal, the cumulative lowest number of points conceded in those fixtures will be used.

13.34.2 Competitive record for both teams against common opponents during the regular season based upon win / loss / tied record and subject to that being equal, the cumulative lowest number of points conceded will be used.

13.34.3 Win / Loss / Tied record within the regular season in comparison to that of their opponents.

13.34.4 A comparison of average points conceded against the top three teams within the division.

13.34.5 A coin toss

*Game Management should ensure that there are back-up medical suppliers / facilities planned for and the travelling team should consider back up transport.*

13.35 A team that terminates a game in progress will be deemed to have forfeited that game by a score determined by playing Rule 8-1-3 (BAFA Rulebook). A team that forfeits a game may suffer the following penalties:

13.35.1 They will pay all game day fees incurred by both teams for the game; and

13.35.2 At the discretion of the Competition Management, the team may be subject to further sanction against the unplayed games or tournaments criteria.

## **14 COMPETITION COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

14.1 On game day, all queries and complaints (a complaint) should be directed to either the Competition Management or the game officials in the first instance, which will be dealt with as follows:

14.2 Where the complaint relates to the competition format (if a tournament structure event) or management, including (but not limited to) the schedule, the opposing team, playing surface or other playing arrangements, a protest must be made, before the start of the match (or as soon as possible after the issue becomes apparent during the match) to the lead game day official and the Competition Management by the relevant Team Official (either a member of the team committee or the Head Coach). The complaint must then be acknowledged by the lead game official and the competition management who will decide what action should be taken; or

14.3 Where the complaint relates to the playing of a fixture, the scoring, and/or its result, the relevant team official, must do the following:

14.3.1 Inform their opponents and the officials of their complaint

14.3.2 Explain the issue in full to the competition management.

14.4 Where a complaint relates to the governance or administration of the Competition by the Competition Management, such complaints will be dealt with under the Complaints Procedure of the British American Football Association.

14.5 Where a complaint relates to the behaviour of an individual or team participating, volunteering or attending the competition which could be considered as a disciplinary offence under the British American Football Association's Disciplinary Regulations, such complaints will be dealt with in accordance with the processes set out in the British American Football Association's Disciplinary Regulations.

## **15. APPEAL OF COMPETITION MANAGEMENT DECISION**

15.1 There are two strands of Appeals relating to decisions made within the National Leagues competitions.

15.2 The first is the Disciplinary Appeals process for players, coaches or others who are recipients of disciplinary action. This is managed via the BAFA process.

15.3 The second is the Competition Appeals Process. A party to a complaint submitted under Section 14.2 and 14.3 shall have the right to appeal a decision made by the competition management in relation to that complaint; **IF**

15.4 The decision has a potential impact on a game result, a league table, or the outcome of the competition; **AND**

15.5 There has been a failure by the Competition Management to follow these Regulations or the Competition Management have reached a decision on the basis of an error of fact which can be proven.

15.6 These are the only grounds of appeal and any appeal must be submitted in accordance with the appeals process set out in this section.

15.7 This Appeals structure sits under the overarching British American Football Association Appeals Process to which the original party of complaint can appeal to following the decision of the Competitions Appeal process.

15.8 An appeal should be forwarded in writing from a member of the team committee of the objecting party to the designated Competition Appeals Chair within 72 hours of the decision being communicated to the team in question. In lieu of the Competition Appeals Committee being formed, the appeal should go to the BAFA Appeals Chair.

15.9 The appeal shall be accompanied by a guarantee for £100 which shall be returned if the appeal is upheld or if there are any other extenuating circumstances. The Competition Appeal Committee (CAC) will decide whether the extenuating circumstance warrant the cheque being returned.

15.10 The Chair will establish a National Leagues Competition Appeal Committee (NLCAC) which will consist of individuals that are independent of the Competition; one of whom will be appointed as the Chair.

15.11 The Chair of the NLCAC will send the appeal to the opposing team and any other team that they believe could be impacted by the outcome of the appeal. These teams will be permitted 72 hours, from the date they receive the appeal from the NLCAC, to submit any evidence or submission that they wish the NLCAC to review and consider.

15.12 All submissions and evidence must be submitted in writing. No parties involved in the appeal, including the appellant, will be able to make a verbal representation to the NLCAC.

15.13 The NLCAC shall meet (either in person or electronically including via email) and conclude the matter within 96 hours of receiving the evidence and submissions.

15.14 The Chair of the NLCAC will subsequently notify all the parties who presented submissions and evidence of their decision and any penalties imposed. The NLCAC shall have the discretion to publish the decision on any Governing Body owned media property.

15.15 The NLCAC shall have the power of the British American Football Association to make all decisions and impose any penalties (including but not limited to, reprimands, the deduction of points, fines, suspensions and expulsions from the competition) relating to the appeal.

15.16 The procedures in this section of the Regulations shall be governed by the Arbitration Act 1996 and amounts to a binding arbitration agreement for the purposes of Section 6 of that Act.

15.17 If the circumstances require a decision to be taken sooner than permitted by this section of the Regulations and all parties to the appeal agree, the timetable with which an appeal is raised, submissions made and the decision taken can be shorter than the 96 hours state. In such cases the NLCAC shall issue a revised timetable which shall be binding on all parties. Where there are pressing dates for a process to be concluded by (i.e. the post season) then the NLCAC has the right to impose shorter timeframes on the process

## **MISCELLANEOUS PROVISOS**

M.1 Failure to comply with any regulation will result in a fine of £25 in the first instance which will double in further instances.

M.2 All participants acknowledge that participating in the sport of American football involves a risk of personal injury and by taking part in the National Leagues competitions whether as a player, team member, team official, other official or spectator, each participant does so at their own risk.

M.3 The British American Football Association or its nominee(s) is entitled to amend these Regulations throughout the year with changes referenced at the end of the Miscellaneous Provisions section.

M.4 Officials provided by BAFRA must be paid in accordance with the BAFRA Terms and Conditions (included in the BAFA Rulebook and on [www.bafra.org](http://www.bafra.org)). Interim officials will be paid as per any agreement made between them and the hometeam.

M.5 The use of stadium clocks is encouraged.

M.6 A scoreboard is encouraged during regular season and playoff games.

M.7 Statistics submission is not mandatory but teams are requested to collect their own statistics for performance and promotional reasons

M.8 The National Leagues management supports the ethical practice scouting and filming for coaching and officiating purposes in the interest of improving the game. All teams should accept and expect official games or tournaments to be scouted and/or filmed by BAFRA, potential opponents or representatives of the teams involved. It is not necessary to seek permission to film for the purposes of coaching unless there are minors involved. The BAFA Welfare Manager should be informed of any issues where there is a request for no filming.

M.9 The Competition Management mandates that if there are minors present, where possible they and their parents / guardians should be informed that filming is taking place and consentsought.

M.10 Where recording is taking place by representatives of the teams competing, recordings may not be used for coaching purposes by either competing team at any time during a game or tournament or between periods of a game.

M.11 In event of a clash, the Home or Host Team will always have first choice of shirt colour. The away team will then be expected to wear a jersey of contrasting colour. Teams are expected to have home and away jerseys of contrasting colour, so that if there is a clash with their home jersey, then they can wear their away jersey. If the visiting team does not have a change available and the home team does, the home team may offer their alternate strip to the away team to wear in the interests of good sportsmanship.

M.12 The British American Football Association recognises the right for teams to adopt a moniker. In regards to monikers the Governing Body reserves the right to refuse entry to competitions for teams which chose monikers which could be viewed as bringing the sport into disrepute.

M.13 The British American Football Association requires teams entering its competitions to have unique names. Whilst teams may share a moniker they may not have the same geographic prefix (or a part thereof) and the same moniker i.e. team 1: London Towers, team 2: South London Towers.

M.14 The British American Football Association requires emerging teams and current teams which may be re-branding to refrain from using the moniker 'Lions' as this is the moniker for the national teams. This is not applicable to schools football. The British American Football Association also requires emerging and current teams to refrain from using the moniker 'Allstars' or a derivative thereof.

M.15 The British American Football Association requires teams which compete in its tournaments to refrain from using geographic names which could imply that they are a regional or national representative team.

M.16 No team will be allowed to compete if they use the following names: Great Britain, Great British, Britain, British, England, English, Scotland, Scottish, Wales, Welsh, UK, United Kingdom, British Isles. Use of these names in the Scottish or Welsh language will also be prohibited.

M.17 Where teams use county names then there are a series of stipulations:

- The team is located within the said county.
- The moniker does not include multiple counties or Regions.

M.18 Teams must gain approval of the Competition Management to change any or all of their:

- Team Name (either the Institution, Town, City or Nickname part);
- Institution of representation and
- Colour of the component parts of the team uniform (socks, pants, shirt and helmet)

M.19 Competition Management may from time to time arrange for a representative to attend a game to ensure minimum standards are being met.

#### **M.20 Reporting of game results to BAFA**

With the introduction of the BAFA Results and fixtures website there is a mandatory requirement for teams to report their results by 5pm on the day following the game.

Both Home and Away teams need to report the result using the instructions provided either via the app, online or by text message. For text messages teams will get a message on the day of the game - so simply have to respond to that message with the score

Failure to meet this requirement will result in the club being fined £25 on each occasion.

