

## **KEY POINTS**

Super Rugby is moving to a conference format -- three conferences with five teams in each

The Australian Conference will house the new team – the 15<sup>th</sup> team – with the location of that team to be decided by the SANZAR Board (a tender process will take place)

Home and away local derbies will be played within each conference

This means in Australia, local derbies content will increase from the current 6 matches to 20 matches (on the proviso the 5<sup>th</sup> team to be added to the Australian conference is an Australian side)

All up, there will be 40 Super Rugby matches played in Australia as opposed to the current 26 (providing the 5<sup>th</sup> team in the Australian conference is an Australian side)

Apart from playing each of the other four teams in their conference home and away, sides will also play across conferences

They play eight of the 10 sides in the other two conferences on a home OR away basis

Australian teams, for instance, will play four of the five sides in the NZ conference (two at home, two away), and four of the five sides in the South African conference (two at home, two away)

The Super Rugby season will run from February to August (except in a Rugby World Cup year when it will start and finish earlier)

This will give each team 16 games per regular season with a six-team finals series to follow

Super Rugby expansion enables Australia to be more competitive with the other football codes for length of season

There will be three-weeks of byes in June during Super Rugby to allow the inbound Tests to be played

After the June internationals there will be a further three rounds of Super Rugby played before the finals series

In a further SANZAR initiative, Tri Nations will undergo a revamp in terms of placement in the calendar

Tri Nations will also create “same time same place” Tests

Tri Nations will always start in South Africa and Australia will always host the opening Bledisloe Cup game in early September (except in a World Cup year when it will be earlier)

In a regular season the Tri Nations will finish with the second and third Bledisloe Cup games – the last Bledisloe will alternate between Australia and New Zealand (depending on which country is hosting two Bledisloe Cup Tests that year)

Revenue and cost sharing for the new competition will also be split evenly between the three countries

### THE SIX-TEAM FINALS SERIES

The three Conference winners and three wildcard teams with the highest number of competition points from any Conference qualify for the playoffs.

The wildcard teams and the Conference winner with the least competition points will play an elimination round to meet the two Conference winners with the greatest number of competition points in the semi-finals.

In other words: 1 and 2 progress straight to the semi finals while 3 v 6 and 4 v 5 will play eliminator finals matches in the first week of the playoffs. The following week 1 and 2 play the winners of the elimination finals. The winners of those two semi finals advance to the final.

- The format for the three weeks of playoffs is as follows:

Playoff Week	Match	Name	Home Team		Away Team
1	A	Elimination Match	Rank 4	v	Rank 5
	B	Elimination Match	Rank 3	v	Rank 6
2	C	Semi-Final	Rank 2	v	Winner of matches A or B with highest Playoff Ranking
	D	Semi-Final	Rank 1	v	Other winner from matches A or B
3	E	Final	Winner of matches C or D with highest Playoff Ranking		Other winner from matches C or D