

## RED BEAVER LEAGUE 25-26



A NEW CHAPTER

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The 25-26 edition of the Red Beaver League will follow a new format. The current format (with 5 levels) will be replaced by a fifteen player League Phase (1 July 2025 to 5 January 2026), followed by Final Play-offs and Relegation/Promotion duels.

RBL C continues as before, but without Play-offs.

### Why? In the current format,

- 1) players play against opponents from their own skill pool and have no prospect of meeting a top-level player
- 2) one loss means there is little perspective left
- 3) higher ranked players have to wait for lower ranked players to finish their duels before they can get involved
- 4) the Contenders only join the fray in the latter stages of the competition

### So:

While the new format erodes the privileged status of the top players (who could repose on their laurels for most of the playing season), it will enhance RBL cohesion and ensure exciting encounters from day 1.

The new format is more *streamlined*: every player (except for the semi-finalists and the player ranked last) has 11 months to play four duels of three and one duel of six matches. That way, each player is set to accumulate at least 105 Experience Points, a respectable data base for the Red Beaver Team Captain (currently Johan Huyck) to base his selection for the World Team Championship on.

The new playing schedule is more *flexible*: players can schedule their League Phase encounters as they wish (within the allotted time span).

## The 25-26 Playing Schedule

### The League Phase

On 1 July 2025 fifteen players will start the League Phase.

#### The draw:

The players are put in five pots, numbered 1 to 5.

- In Pot 1 (Red) we find: the 24-25 RBL Champion + numbers 1 and 2,
- In Pot 2 (Blue) the numbers 3 to 5,
- in Pot 3 (Orange) the numbers 6 to 8,
- in Pot 4 (Green) the numbers 9 to 11, and
- in Pot 5 (Yellow) number 12 + two promovendi \* from RBL C.

[\*the promovendi are the winners of the duels between Loser RP1 v Contender 3 and between Loser RP2 and Contender 4]

Players will be drawn against four different opponents, one from each of the other four pots. They will play two duels (3 matches) at home and two duels away (before 5 January 2026).

#### Note 1:

- 1) in each Pot the players are ranked randomly
- 2) no two players will have a mutual opponent
- 3) the draw will be done at the 2025 RBL event on Saturday 28 June 2025

#### Note 2:

The Contender League Phase runs parallel with the RBL League Phase. Contenders 1 to 4 enter RBL after New Year.

### The Leaderboard

Players will be ranked in a Leaderboard according to: duels won, total points, match wins, OPR.

In the Final Leaderboard the players ranked 1 to 8 qualify directly for the Final Play-offs.

The players ranked 9 and 10 will face each other in an ultimate duel (6 matches) with the last spot in Pot 3 (Orange) at stake.

The players ranked 11 to 14 play one Relegation duel (6 matches) against the Four Contenders. These pairings are random.

The player ranked 15 will relegate directly to RBL C.

### **The Final Play-offs**

After the League Phase, the top 8 in the Final Leaderboard will face each other in the Quarter Finals.

The players who finish 1 to 4 in the League Phase secure a better seed in this Final Round of 8 bracket guaranteeing a lower ranked opponent:

- QF1: (1) v (8)
- QF2: (4) v (5)
- QF 3: (3) v (6)
- QF 4: (2) v (7)

The QF winners progress to the SF stage (6 matches):

- SF1: Winner QF1 v Winner QF2
- SF2: Winner QF3 v Winner QF4

The two QF losers with the best OPR's end up in Pot 2. The other two QF losers end up in Pot 3. Their programme is completed.

The SF winners play the final: Winner SF 1 v Winner SF 2 (9 matches).

The SF losers play a Consolation Final with the third spot in Pot 2 at stake (6 matches):  
Loser SF 1 v Loser SF 2.

### **The Relegation duels**

The Players ranked 11 to 14 play Relegation duels against the four Contenders (6 matches), paired randomly.

The two winners with the best OPR's will earn spots in Pot 4. The other two winners take spots in Pot 5.

The last spot in Pot 5 is given to the loser with the best OPR.

### **The Orange/Green Pot decider**

Players (9) and (10) also play a final duel (6 matches) to decide who will take the spot in Pot 3 and who goes to Pot 4.

## Schedule

2024 2025	2025 - 2026							2026-2027	
	July - Dec 2025	FINAL	CHAMPIONSHIP PLAY OFFS						
		LEADERBOARD	Jan-Feb	Mar-Apr	May-June	WINNER			
CHAMPION	P 1	<p>League Phase</p>	1	Quarter Finals (6)	Semi Finals (6)	Final (9) (+ Cons Final) (6)	WINNER	P 1	
1			2				FINALIST		
2	3		3th Place						
3	4		4th Place		OPR	P 2			
4	5		QF LOSERS:						
5	6								
6	7								
6	P 3			<p>Contenders League Phase</p> <p>(4 encounters in 6 months)</p>	8	<p>RELEGATION DUELS</p>	WIN	P 3	
7			9		LOST				
8	10		WIN		P 4				
9	11		WIN						
10	12		WIN						
11	P 4		13		WIN		P 5		
12			14		WIN				
(C1)	P 5		15 EXIT		OPR				
(C2)									
(Bubbles) Jan - May 2025			1						
			2						
			3						
			4						

## General remarks

### Early resignation

All League Phase duels need to be played completely to ensure the integrity of the Leaderboard. So even if the score is 4-0 after M2, the third match has to be played.

However, in the second half of the playing season (January to June) duels (except for the Final) consist of 6 matches. Here, players may resign, but at the earliest after M3 is played to a finish.

### **Bounties and TR fees**

As in 24-25, bounties and TR fees will not be paid cash, but will serve as discounts for the RBL event (last Saturday of June 2026).

The bounty thresholds are (for player who wins):

Pot 1 player	below 4,2
Pot 2 player	below 4,5
Pot 3 player	below 5,0
Pot 4 player	below 5,5
Pot 5 player	below 6,0

The discounts:

	Duel of 3 matches	Duel of 6 matches	Duel of 9 matches
The bounty discounts	15%	25%	50%
The TR fee discounts	€ 20	€ 40	€ 50

### **Participation fee**

A 90€ PF needs to be paid before 28 June 2025, the day of the RBL Event.

This PF includes:

- XG transcriptions of all your matches
- XG transcriptions of all matches played by your co-competitors
- the chance to earn discounts for the RBL Event through bounties and TR fees

Players who reach the SF stage pay 5€ per extra scheduled match. No refunds are given to players who resign early.

Note: the TR fee waiver for players who host a home game is dropped.

## Repercussions for the 24-25 season

### What's at stake?

Transitioning from the current to the new format has an impact on the 24-25 season. As we go from a 5-level grid with a Champion to a five-pot system, certain duels gain in importance as others lose relevance.

Example: the R2 and R3 duels (= the Relegation duels in Levels 2 and 3) lose relevance since both Winner and Loser end up in the same Pot.

The Barrage duels, by contrast, appear to gain importance.

Particularly in the Relegation/Promotion zone, some impromptu decisions will have to ensure a fair conclusion of the 24-25 season. Time restraints and avoidance of a too heavy play load will most probably necessitate the shortening of certain RP duels to 3 instead of 6 matches.

### The Relegation/Promotion settlement:

Of the two Winners of RP1 and RP2 the one with the best OPR takes the Pot 4 spot while the other one ends up in Pot 5.

Note: if a player's OPR is marred by an illegal resignation (i.e. a loss on time), his OPR is corrected by omitting the best and worst PR from his XG profile.

The losers of RP1 and RP2 play against Contenders 3 and 4 respectively with the last two places in Pot 5 at stake.

### The trophy

The RBL trophy (now in possession of Marc Van Damme, the current Champion) will be awarded to either Geert Van der Stricht or Marc if they succeed in winning the 24-25 RBL season.

Should the 24-25 Champion be somebody else, the trophy will go to whoever wins it a second time in the coming year(s).

M.L., January 2025