

North Midlands RFU Shield Competition Rules – 2025-26

1) The Competition shall be called the North Midlands Shield Competition. It will be organised by the Competitions Committee of the North Midlands Rugby Football Union. The name of any sponsor may be attached to the title of the Competition.

2) The Competition shall be open to such members of the North Midlands Rugby Football Union as the Competitions Committee shall propose, subject to confirmation by the Full Committee of the North Midlands Rugby Football Union. This shall be all North Midland Clubs in league levels 9 and 10 (First Teams Only) who have not been disqualified for any reason by the North Midlands Competitions Committee.

3) All matches played in the Competition shall be played under the Laws of Rugby Football and comply with the by-laws, Rules, Regulations and Resolutions of the Rugby Football Union and of the North Midlands Rugby Football Union.

4) The Regulations of the Rugby Football Union Intermediate Club Knockout Competition (Intermediate Cup) will apply in general to this Competition, specifically those relating to drawn matches including the use of rolling replacements.

5) A player or replacement in a Cup match must have effective registration for the Club for which he plays or acts as a replacement.

6) ~~Players may only play for a club's league 2nd (or 3rd) team if they have played 5 games or fewer for their 1st (or 2nd) team. Not applicable this season.~~

7)

(a) Except as in 7(b) a maximum squad of 18 players shall be nominated by each team prior to kick-off, of whom 4 players shall be capable of playing in the front row. Should a team nominate fewer than 18 players, the requirement for 4 front row players remains.

(b)

(i) In the Final only, a maximum squad of 22 players shall be nominated by each finalist prior to kick-off, of whom 5 players from each squad shall be capable of playing in the front row.

(ii) Should a team nominate fewer than 22 players, the requirement of 5 front row players remains.

(iii) In the interest of safety, each team must have 5 players in their nominated match squad, all at least 18 years old who are suitably trained and experienced to be capable of playing in the front row to ensure that on the first or second occasions, (whether due to injury or consequent to a player(s) being temporarily suspended or ordered off) that a front row player is required to be replaced, the team shall continue to play safely with contested scrums.

(c)

All other Laws must be played under the World Rugby Laws of the Game. See link below:

[Laws of the Game | World Rugby Laws](https://www.world.rugby/the-game/laws/law/1/)

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8) If conditions prevent a match being played, it will be re-arranged on a date as directed by the Competitions Committee.

9) All the rounds will be drawn and the first club drawn will be the home team, except in the final, which will be played on a ground nominated and arranged by the Competitions Committee. In all other rounds, the home club shall be responsible for the match arrangements and the visiting club for its own travelling costs.

10) Due to the number of teams in the Competition varying from season to season, the organisation of the rounds shall be as directed by the Competitions Committee.

11) In the event of a clash of colours, the home team will be responsible for changing, except in the final when both teams will change.

12) Referees will be appointed by the North Midlands Society of Rugby Football Referees, who may also appoint two of their members to act as touch judges. The touch judges, if appointed, will have full authority to assist the referee as allowed under the Laws of Rugby Football.

13) The home club is responsible for correctly and clearly marking the pitch. It must make proper provision to ensure that (with the exception of the touch judges) all spectators, replacements and officials are kept at a reasonable distance from the field of play. The use of barrier tape for spectators is strongly recommended for clubs without hard barriers.

14) The Secretary of the home club shall be responsible for confirming the result on to the RFU GMS system before 5pm on the day of the match.

15) Each home club must provide a nominated 4th Official for each match. His duties will be to:

a) Ensure that he is introduced to the referee at least 45 minutes before the designated kick-off.

b) Ensure that the half time period is agreed between the clubs. The norm will be 5 minutes, unless both clubs agree to 10 minutes. Under no circumstances should the teams leave the pitch at half time. He should ensure that the referee is aware, at least 30 minutes before the kick-off, of the half time period.

c) Be responsible for the administration of all substitutions and replacements (blood or otherwise). He may have two boards carrying the players' numbers and these may be displayed on each occasion a substitution takes place. He is responsible for logging all such movements, noting the names, reason for and time of substitution. He is also responsible for ensuring the correct nomination of front row replacements and informing the referee of their names at least 30 minutes prior to the kick-off. These logs should be retained in case reference is needed in the future.

d) Ensure that water carriers do not enter the field of play except with the permission of the referee. Players requiring water or other refreshment must go to the touchline.

e) Away officials should co-operate fully with the 4th official.

16) Playing squads must be recorded via the RFU GMS system before the start of the match.

17) All matters of dispute must be referred to the North Midlands Competition Committee whose decision will be binding and final on any matters relating to the Competition, whether or not provided for in any of these rules.

18) Prior to the commencement of the Competition, club secretaries should nominate to the Competition Committee the person responsible within their club for the operation of the Competition. Other than in exceptional circumstances, the person appointed should act as the sole Liaison Officer between Club and Competitions Committee. All communications between the Club Liaison Officer and the Cup Secretary will be by e-mail, therefore Club Secretaries should inform the Cup Secretary of the relevant e-mail address prior to the commencement of the Competition.

19) In line with the Regulations set out by the Rugby Football Union Competitions Sub-Committee, any North Midlands Club failing to compete in, or failing to complete its commitment to, the North Midlands Cup Competition into which it has been entered, may be denied entry into the North Midlands Cup Competition in the following season.

20) Ties shall be played on the Saturday of the designated weekend (the first available non-league/non RFU KO Competition weekend) unless both clubs mutually agree that the tie shall be played on the Sunday of the designated weekend.

21) N.B. All Rounds (except the Final) must be completed before the end of April.

22) In rounds other than the final, if the scores are level after 80 minutes, it is 10 minutes each way extra time, then tries, then goals. If still equal, then THE AWAY TEAM WINS.

23) In the Finals, if at the end of 80 minutes play, the scores are equal, then the following procedure will be followed to decide who will be declared the winner:

a) The side that has scored the most tries shall be declared the winners.

b) If this does not produce a result, the team that has scored the most goals from tries shall be declared the winners.

c) If scores are still equal then the winners will be the team that scored the first points in the game whether that be a goal, a try, a penalty goal or a successful drop kick as there is no away team due to the neutral venue.

Competition Administrator: Anthony Harbutt