



NORTH MIDLANDS RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

YOUTH KNOCKOUT CUP & PLATE REGULATIONS

Revised 2026/27

The competition shall be called the “**NORTH MIDLANDS RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION YOUTH KNOCKOUT CUP and PLATE COMPETITION**”.

There will be three age groups Under 14, Under 15 and Under 16. The Competition will be open to clubs that have affiliated to the N.M.R.F.U.

All matches will be played under the Laws of the IRB (under 19 variations) and comply with the byelaws, rules and regulations of the R.F.U & N.M.R.F.U. All games to be played according to AGE GRADE RUGBY guidelines as directed in Regulation 15 of the Rugby Football Union, including ‘The Half Game Rule’.

Clubs participating in the competition agree to accept and to be bound by the following Rules.

1. Player eligibility:

- 1.1** To represent a club, all players must be bona-fide members of that club, must comply with the age regulation and **must be registered to the club with the RFU**. Clubs failing to comply with this rule may be excluded from the competitions.
- 1.2** No player may represent more than one club in the competition (Cup & Plate are considered to be the one competition) in the same Season. Clubs failing to comply with this rule may be excluded from the competitions.
- 1.3** RFU registration cards must be produced if asked for by referees, opposing managers or coaches. Failure to do so may result in the player being asked to withdraw from the team and the offending team conceding the game.
- 1.4** Players may represent their club at more than one age group. This can only happen when playing up an age level, and only after having obtained prior written permission from the club coach and parent or guardian as per RFU regulations. **A player cannot play down an age level in this competition.**
- 1.5** The team coach/manager is responsible to ensure that squad members are registered
- 1.6** North Midlands Rugby Football Union are asking all clubs who have teams participating in the Youth Knockout Cup & Plate competitions to ensure that parents have given permission for photographs to be taken of their children during all the rounds their clubs are involved in. Unless the Cup Secretary and the team's opponents are made aware of any objections, it will be deemed that all relevant permission has been sought and granted. The North Midlands Rugby Football Union will not be held responsible for any adverse incidents that may occur.
- 1.7** **The Half-Game Rule is expected to be enforced by all competing teams.** If clubs feel this regulation is not being followed they are invited to inform the Cup Secretary, immediately following a game. If clubs known to have a large mini and junior set up begin to bring smaller squads to fixtures, this will be treated as a breach of this regulation and investigated as such.
- 1.8** A maximum of 22 players may be selected in a match-day squad. A minimum of thirteen players may be available for a club to undertake a fixture. If a team starts with players short from a fifteen then the opposition must only start the game with one extra player against them.

2. Cup Competition:

There will be an entry fee of £20.00 for each team to be entered in the competition.

- 3. Deadline for entry:** If no entry is received on or before 12 noon on the **2nd September 2026** then that club cannot enter either the Cup or Plate competitions.

- 4. Plate Competition:** All clubs fielding teams who lose their game in the preliminary and first rounds of the Cup will be included in the Plate draw. **Teams who forfeit Preliminary Cup or Cup 1st Round fixtures will not progress to the Plate.**

- 4.1. The draw for the **PRELIMINARY & FIRST** rounds of the **Plate** competition will be made after the 1st Round of the Cup has been completed.
- 4.2. In the event of more than 16 teams being eligible for the Plate Competition a draw to select the teams for the Preliminary round will be made first.

5. Dates of Games: -

- 5.1 The competition games shall be played on the designated date as per the schedule, and in compliance with the North Midlands CB Rugby Calendar, which has been submitted to the Rugby Football Union and approved.
- 5.2 Should a game be called off for whatever reason then it must be played on the scheduled Reserve Weekend for that round.
- 5.3 Should the game be called off for a second time, a date will be issued from the Cup Secretary on which the game must be played. When setting this date, the Cup Secretary will aim to avoid State School Holidays, Mothers Day, Remembrance Sunday and Representative clashes where at all possible. Once this date has been issued, failure to play the tie on this date, will result in a forfeit.
- 5.4 The date for the **Finals of the 2026-27 Competition are included in the entry information. By entering the competition you are accepting to be available on this date and reserve date (if applicable) if your team makes the finals. Unavailability for a Finals Date will result in a forfeit of your Semi Final tie.**

6. Results Sheet/Match Card:

- 6.1. Before any game starts both teams must complete the team section of the Results Sheet/Match Card.
- 6.2. After the game the victorious side must e-mail the result to the Cup Secretary within 24 hours of the game being completed. The victorious side in all cases must return via e-mail the result form and team sheets within 7 days of the game being completed. Failure to comply with this will result in a sanction.

7. Clash of Colours: - When there is a clash of colours the Home team must change jerseys.

8. Postponement of Matches:

- 8.1 **NO MATCH MAY BE POSTPONED OR REARRANGED WITHOUT THE PRIOR PERMISSION OF THE CUP SECRETARY.**
- 8.2 A team may request a postponement if five or more players are selected for Representative Rugby (CB/Divisional/National).

9. Pitch Conditions:

- 9.1. If the ground condition at the "HOME" club prevents a game from being played then the "AWAY" club **MUST** be given the opportunity to host the game on the specified day.
- 9.2. If the ground condition of both clubs is unsuitable a neutral ground may be used.
- 9.3. If no ground is suitable the game **MUST** be played on the allocated Reserve Weekend.
- 9.4. If a team does not play the postponed game on the Reserve Weekend following the originally scheduled date of that round it shall **FORFEIT THE MATCH**.
- 9.5. **If there is any doubt about the conditions of a pitch ahead of a game, the home team must inform the Away Team at least 24 hours before kick-off to let them know there may be an issue. This allows the Away side to determine if there is a suitable pitch at their club the following day. A call must be then made early enough either the day before, or on the morning of the fixture, for the fixture to be reversed and the referee informed of the new venue. Failure to comply with this could result in the Home side forfeiting the round.**

10. Inability to field a Team: If a club is unable to field a team, other than by the loss of five or more players to Representative Rugby (CB/Divisional/National) then it shall **FORFEIT THE MATCH**.

11. Kick Off: Clubs with two or more ties on the same day will be asked to stagger their KOs to help with referee allocation.

12. Safety: All pitches must be clearly marked, and spectators kept at the RFU recommended distance from the touchlines by a barrier. The North Midlands Referees Society and North Midlands RFU have provided clubs with Pitch Side Marshal's equipment to ensure that the RFU codes of conduct are observed at all times.

- 13. Referees:** The North Midlands Referees Society will provide referees whenever possible. It is the Home club's responsibility to contact the Society to request an official. A request for a referee should be entered on "Whosthere?" at least 8 days before the tie.
- ◆ If the home club establishes via recorded communication with North Midlands Referees Society that no referee is available to be appointed then it is the Home club's responsibility to find another qualified referee. The order of these attempts should follow:
 - 1) Seek a qualified referee from a neighbouring society
 - 2) Seek a qualified referee from a neighbouring club
 - 3) Seek a qualified referee from within your own club, not associated to your age group
 - 4) Seek a qualified referee from within the visiting club, not associated to your age group
 - 5) Seek a qualified referee from within your own club, associated to your team
- This option should only be taken after North Midlands Referees Society have informed you of no available referee.** If this option is taken before that then the home side may face expulsion from the competition.
- ◆ Under NO CIRCUMSTANCE may the coach of the side or an unqualified parent of a participating player officiate the Match.
- 14. Touch judges:** Both teams **MUST** provide a competent touch judge, who should not be a replacement or substitute.
- 15. Duration of Matches:**
- ◆ Under 14s - 25 minutes each way playing time (size 4 ball)
 - ◆ Under 15s - 30 minutes each way playing time (size 5 ball)
 - ◆ Under 16s - 35 minutes each way playing time (size 5 ball)
- 16. Injury time:** Time should be added to playing time for stoppages due to injury, but **NOT EXTRA TIME** in the event of a draw.
- 17. Points Difference:** If the difference in scores exceeds 50 points the game **MUST END** and the **RESULT STANDS**. If Clubs wish to continue that is considered a separate game.
- 18. Drawn Matches:** Winners will be determined by number of tries scored. If these are equal, the number of Conversions kicked. If these are still equal the Team drawn **AWAY** will be awarded the tie even if the tie is played at the opposite venue. **In the Final if tries and conversions are equal the trophy will be shared.**
- 19. Disputes:** ANY MATTERS OF DISPUTE OR ANY OTHER TRANSGRESSION OF THESE REGULATIONS SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY REFERRED TO THE CUP SECRETARY.
- 20. Appeal:** Any appeal against the decision of the Youth Cup Secretary can be made to the Chairman of the North Midlands RFU **WHOSE DECISION SHALL BE FINAL.**
- 21. Abandoned Games:** Where any game is abandoned by the referee, a decision on the outcome shall be made by the Youth Cup Secretary following consideration of the referee's report and any other such evidence that the Cup Secretary shall consider. The Youth Cup Secretary's decision shall be final in this case.
- 22. Further Appeal:** By entering these competitions all clubs accept the rules and relinquish the right to further appeal beyond rule 20.
- 23. Combined Teams:** Entering of combined teams, made up of players from two differing clubs, is a possibility, but a number of criteria must be met to enable this, such as both clubs not having enough players to enter a side legitimately on their own. Each application for this will be taken on its own merits and should the Youth Cup Secretary deem the application to be used for competitive benefit, then the application will be declined. Combinations will only be considered before the entry deadline – this cannot be done mid-way through the competitions.