

Competition Regulations
Dorset & Wilts Senior Knock-Out Competitions 2025-2026

All matches are to be played under the Laws of the Rugby Football Union and in accordance with the Regulations set out in the RFU handbook where not otherwise specified in these regulations. The Dorset & Wilts Referees Society will be asked to appoint a referee for each match in an adult Dorset & Wilts RFU knock out competition. Assistant referees will be requested for Cup finals. The home or host club is to confirm arrangements with the appointed referee at least 3 days prior to the match but if a referee is not available for a match, then the host club must make every effort to source one.

For adult rugby in the SW and hence for Dorset & Wilts the away team changes.

Competition Administrators:

Counties:2

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Specific applications of the rules are:

1. Player Eligibility. No player may play for more than one club in any Dorset & Wilts RFU knock out competition in any one season. Every player must be a playing member of the club he is representing in accordance with the rules of the club and the RFU. A club shall only select members who play regularly for the club and shall not introduce players especially for a competition. The penalty for breach of these rules will be a £25 fine, and the offending team will forfeit the match. The committee has the power to deny a club entry the following year.

1.1. Counties 2 Competition. All players representing clubs in the English Club Championship ("the Leagues") whether taking part in league or knock out matches must be registered in accordance with the rules that apply to their league level.

1.2. Counties 3 Competition All players representing clubs in the English Club Championship ("the Leagues") whether taking part in league or knock out matches must be registered in accordance with the rules that apply to their league level or affiliated as appropriate.

1.3 Eligibility – If any higher XV's do not have a competitive fixture, then eligibility is restricted to players who have not represented the Club at a higher level in 50% or more of League matches in the current season up to the day of the match.

2. Entry Procedures and Draws. Clubs have been requested express an interest in entering the County Cups. The draw will be made in advance of the first round and communicated to the teams and D&W Referees society at the earliest opportunity and available on the RFU Fixtures and results. Entries will be supported by an entry fees £40 one team, £70 two teams per club.

3. Withdrawals.

3.1. Fixture Failure. In the event that a club, having entered, fails to fulfil its commitment in any round of the competition it may be liable for any compensation due to a host club for cancellation at short notice. Such a withdrawal is to be supported by reasons given in writing by an officer of the club within 7 days of the date assigned to the fixture. A failure to give adequate reason may mean a penalty will be imposed and a further penalty may be levied for a failure to respond promptly to requests for information from any member of the Committee.

4. **Competition Schedules.** Dorset & Wilts competitions this season will be run utilising a combination of the following dates: within the view to endeavouring to integrate within the league programme

OCTOBER 25th

NOVEMBER 1st

NOVEMBER 25th

JANUARY 4th

FEBRUARY 7th

FEBRUARY 21st

MARCH 14th

MAY 2nd

5. **Finals.** The final for each competition will be hosted by the team nominated in the draw as the home team.

6. **Changes.** The approval of the Administrator is required prior to any change in arrangements for a match. requests and approvals for such a change are to be confirmed formally in writing or by e mail. Any requests to play under lights must also have the floodlighting approved to play and certified as per RFU regulations.

7. **Results, Team Lists and Verification.** The Administrator (see list above) is to be notified of the result by telephone by 6pm on match day, reinforced by e mail if necessary.

Electronic Match Cards to be completed and submitted by 23.59 Monday night post-match.

8. **Drawn Matches.** If the scores are level at the end of a match in a knock out there will be a five-minute break, the teams will change ends and there will be a period of extra time of 10 minutes each way, with a one-minute interval. If the scores are then still equal, the team that has scored most tries shall be declared the winner. If this does not produce a result, the team that has scored the most goals from tries shall be declared the winner. If this does not produce a result then in all matches save for matches played at neutral venues, the away team shall be declared the winner. For matches played at a neutral venue under arrangements made by the committee, as would be the case for most Cup Finals, if the scores are still tied then the result shall be decided as follows:

Each team shall nominate one player from its number on the field of play at the final whistle to participate on its behalf in a place-kicking competition.

Starting with the kicker from the team that kicked off the match, each kicker in turn shall attempt a place kick from the predetermined positions indicated in Regulation 13.6.5(b)(iii)(D) of the RFU Regulations until such time as, after an equal number of attempts, one kicker has kicked more goals than the other.

These attempts will be made towards the goal posts nearest the players' entrance tunnel to the pitch or in the event of both sets of goal posts being of equal distance from the players entrance tunnel the goal posts to the left of the said tunnel when emerging from it.

The attempts will be taken from the following positions in turn, repeating the sequence until a winner is decided:

the centre of the 22-metre line

the intersection of 22-metre and 15-metre lines to left of posts facing

the intersection of 22-metre and 5-metre lines to left of posts facing

the intersection of 22-metre and 15-metre lines to right of posts facing

the intersection of 22-metre and 5-metre lines to right of posts facing.

9. **Penalties.** The Committee Secretary or Competition Administrator may impose a penalty for any failure to comply with reporting requirements or breaches of any rules. The penalty for each failure will be £25 at the discretion of the Committee. A fine is subject to confirmation by the competitions committee to which a club may appeal but if confirmed the penalty can be increased. An appeal above that level would be to the Chair of the management board of D&W RFU.

10. Replacements. The number of replacements is summarised in Appendix herein. Finals will be 7. For games prior to the final a maximum of 5 replacements will be allowed

11. Disputes. In the event of a dispute or an objection that cannot be resolved by the Administrator, a club must put its concerns in writing and send them to the Hon Sec of D&W (admin@dwrugby.co.uk). If the problem relates to a match, then it must be received no later than 4 days after the match concerned. The Committee shall have absolute discretion to resolve any such disputes or objections as it shall think fit. The Committee's decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

Appendix - SUBSTITUTIONS AND REPLACEMENTS

Rolling substitutions will apply to D&W Cup matches. Implementation is in accordance with RFU Regulations. An extract follows:

1. Each team shall be permitted to use rolling substitutions of not more than the maximum number of the "Player Interchanges" set out in the table below: In the D&W Competitions, for all rounds apart from the Final up to 5 replacements may be used. For the Final up to 7. In both instances the match day squad should contain at least 5 players capable of playing in the front row.

Number of Replacements	Player Interchanges
Up to 3	8
4	9
5	10
7 or 8	12

2. After the Player Interchanges have been made no other replacements, substitutions or Player Interchanges will be permitted for any reason (including temporary or permanent injuries, sending offs and suspensions) and in the event that a Player is injured, sent off or suspended from the field the team will play with one less Player and with uncontested scrums in the event that this involves a front row Player and the game cannot continue safely with contested scrums.

3. For the avoidance of doubt, Player Interchanges replace the "blood bin" which means that if a Player has an open wound and thus has to leave the field, this will be classified as a Player Interchange if that Player is replaced by another Player. If a team has used all of its Player Interchanges, that Player may not be replaced, and the team shall continue with one less Player than was on the pitch prior to the "blood bin". The Player is permitted to return once the wound has been treated and the bleeding stopped.

4. Not more than two Player Interchanges per team may occur at any one time and may only occur during a stoppage in play and with the knowledge of the Referee who is entitled in his sole opinion to refuse to allow or postpone a Player Interchange if he believes either that the Player Interchange would prevent the opposition from restarting the game quickly or where a Player has been injured or that it would not be safe for the replacement Player who has been previously injured to play in the match.

5. A Player must enter the field of play on the halfway line.

6. A Player, who is a replacement, shall not be entitled to take a kick at goal until a passage of play has taken place since that Player took to the field of play.

7. A Player who suffers two injuries in a match which has necessitated that Player being replaced on each occasion is not permitted to act as a replacement following the second injury..