

DORSET & WILTS RFU COMPETITION REGULATIONS FOR SENIOR MENS RUGBY

1. Organising Committee.

The Senior Men's Competition Working Group is an executive element of the Community Rugby Committee ("the Committee") and is appointed by the Dorset & Wilts RFU Council. The Committee has responsibility for the regulation and administration of all Dorset & Wilts RFU Senior Men's competitions between affiliated clubs. The Committee will appoint an Administrator for each competition who will liaise with clubs for the administration of the competition.

1.1. Powers.

The Committee has full power to adjudicate on all matters relating to those competitions. Its decisions are binding and final on any matter not provided for in these rules and on the interpretation of these rules. The Committee has the power to exclude clubs at any stage of those competitions.

1.2 Membership.

The Chair will be appointed by the Community Rugby Committee Chair from its membership. Other members will be co-opted as required including a Secretary. The Committee will include all Dorset & Wilts League Secretaries and those appointed by the Chairman to administer each competition listed in paragraph 2 below – current appointees are **Chris Jones (1st XV cups)** and **Mike Moysey (Lower XV cups)**. Others may be invited to attend as may be appropriate and available, such as a representative of the Referees Society or others concerned with organisation and support of rugby in Dorset & Wilts such as RFU staff.

2. Entry Criteria and Withdrawals.

Entry to Dorset & Wilts RFU knock out competitions is limited to clubs affiliated to Dorset & Wilts RFU, a geographic constituent body, but clubs affiliated to neighbouring Constituent Bodies may be accepted for entry to league and merit table competitions. Teams that withdraw from a competition may be denied entry in a subsequent season. Entry to RFU competitions requires Dorset & Wilts RFU approval which will only be given to clubs that enter and compete in the relevant Dorset & Wilts RFU competition from which they may be nominated. Competitions will be administered by the committee as follows with eligibility criteria for entry as given.

2.1 1st XV Knock Out Cup.

The competition entry is restricted to the Dorset & Wilts clubs in the English National Club Championship Leagues Level 7 and will be a qualifying competition for the RFU Southern Counties Cup and RFU Intermediate Cup.

2.2. 1st XV Knock Out Vase.

This competition is for Dorset & Wilts 1st XV's who play in League Level 8 and will be a qualifying competition for the RFU & Southern Counties Senior Vase.

2.3. 1st XV Knock Out Plate.

This competition is for all other Dorset & Wilts 1st XV's who play in League Level 9 and below and will be a qualifying competition for the RFU & Southern Counties Junior Vase.

2.4. Lower XV Knock Outs.

The committee will offer the opportunity for lower XVs to enter knock outs and organise their grouping as deemed appropriate to ensure a reasonable and effective competition.

3. Competition Rules and Administrative Instructions.

Appendices to these regulations set out the rules and administrative instructions that apply. These are:

3.1. Appendix 1. Dorset & Wilts RFU Senior Knock Out Competitions.

3.2. Appendix 2. Dorset & Wilts RFU Senior Leagues - De-regulation.

4. Ground Safety & Touchline Protocol.

Host clubs are responsible for ensuring grounds are safe and that adequate arrangements have been made to delineate spectator and replacement areas in accordance with RFU Regulations.

Dorset & Wilts RFU have promulgated a Touchline Protocol that will be used as the yardstick by which referees will judge that a match may be played.

5. Risk Assessment.

With reference to the specifications in RFU Regulation and in accordance with the protocol all clubs in Dorset & Wilts are required to undertake a risk assessment of all their pitches before the first match of each season bearing in mind the requirements to afford protection, the level of play and the likelihood and severity of mishap that could occur - including but without exception the impact that the barrier may also have. A copy of this risk assessment is to be held on site.

6. Replacements and Substitutions.

The RFU regulation is to be followed in respect of replacements and substitutions except where specifically amended in Appendices 1 & 2. Guidance on interchanges and substitutions in Dorset & Wilts RFU competition is detailed in section 11 below.

7. Dorset & Wilts Representative Fixtures & Competition Finals.

Guidelines for clubs that agree to host representative fixtures, cup finals or festivals are given in **Appendix 4.**

Appendix 1 of DORSET & WILTS RFU Competition Regulations

Dorset & Wilts Senior Knock-Out Competitions 2021-22

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 this handbook. 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 2nd or 3rd XV match then the host club must make every effort to source one. Attention is drawn to the RFU and SW Regulations on drawn matches, referees and touch judges, replacements and identification of players, postponed and abandoned matches, kick offs and grounds. Note that the RFU and SW differ on clashes of colours. For adult

rugby in the SW and hence for Dorset & Wilts the away team. 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, but players are not Cup tied for Dorset & Wilts competitions by having taken part in an RFU Knock Out competition for another club. Players may transfer clubs and play in League matches as long as registration requirements have been met. 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. Specific rules on player eligibility for competitions are as follows:

1.1. 1st XV Competitions.

All players representing 1st XVs in knock out matches must be registered in accordance with the rules that apply to their league level. It should be noted that all players in 1st XVs at Level 8 and above require to be registered.

1.2. 2nd XV Competitions.

Any player who meets the membership criteria can be picked to represent his club 2nd XV if the club have selected a 1st XV for any RFU or Dorset & Wilts competition fixture the same weekend that does not include him. If there is no 1st XV competition fixture, then eligibility is restricted to players who have not represented the Club 1st XV in 50% or more of League matches in the current season up to the day of the match. Players listed on the bench for a 1st XV league fixture will not be counted for this purpose.

1.3. 3rd XV Competition.

Any player who meets the membership criteria can be picked to represent his club 3rd XV if the club has selected a 1st XV and 2nd XV for any RFU or Dorset & Wilts competitive fixture the same weekend that does not include him. If either of the 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. Players listed on the bench for a 2nd XV league fixture will not be counted for this purpose.

2. Entry Procedures and Draws.

Clubs are to be given 4 weeks' notice of the requirement to enter a Senior Competition prior to the closing date. Entries are to be submitted on the pro forma circulated for the purpose and accompanied by entry fees and deposits as specified. Closing dates for entries for senior competitions are to be set so that the draws can be notified to clubs at or before the AGM. The Committee will seed draws as necessary to affect a balanced competition and will specify venues and timings with the draw.

3. Withdrawals.

3.1. Team Failure.

In the event that a team from a club with two or more XV's ceases to fulfil fixtures on a regular basis during a season then, at the discretion of the committee, it will be deemed to have withdrawn from any lower-level competition in which it may be entered and they will lose their deposit.

3.2. Fixture Failure.

In the event that a team, having entered, fails to fulfil its commitment in any round of any knockout competition then the committee has the discretion to withhold repayment of the deposit, to impose a financial penalty on the club and debar the team from subsequent entry depending on the circumstances. This is in addition to 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 will 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.

3.3. Consequences for Lower XVs.

In particular a club that withdraws its team from the 1st XV Cup will be deemed to have withdrawn its 2nd XV & 3rd XV respectively from any knockout - if it is still in one at the time of withdrawal.

4. Competition Schedules.

Dorset & Wilts RFU competitions are planned to fit in with the Senior Structured Season which the RFU publishes each year. Every non-league weekend within the season is taken to be available for competition with the exception of those declared by the RFU in the Structured Season to be a "ring fenced weekend" where matches can only be arranged if both clubs and the Committee agree. The Competition Administrator will promulgate the weekend on or by which each match is to be played.

5. Finals.

Dorset & Wilts Knock Out Finals will take place at neutral venues unless both teams agree otherwise. Target dates for finals will be circulated by Competition Administrators. The venue and date for each Knockout Final will be confirmed by the Committee when sufficient progress has been achieved in that competition. If the competition would otherwise not be concluded within the season, then a mid-week final may be required. 1st XV competitions will usually have to be complete before Christmas in order that the winners may go forward into the national competition, so schedules will be very tight. Note that in a Final at a neutral venue the team drawn first is to supply the balls for the match and is the home team for administrative purposes, colour clashes etc..

6. Precedence.

If either team drawn to play in a match in a Dorset & Wilts competition is committed to an RFU competition, then the next available Saturday is to be used as per RFU rules of precedence. Dorset & Wilts RFU competition matches take precedence after RFU, Representative and League commitments but ahead of other fixtures.

Note: In exceptional circumstances, in order to progress the competition, the Committee can order the match to be played on the Sunday where a higher precedence match has been played on the Saturday or to be played mid-week where floodlights are available. The Competition Administrator is to be notified as soon as this situation becomes known. Only when the situation is unavoidable will clubs be ordered to play on the Sunday of the same weekend as another competition. Administrators must be informed directly a League or RFU fixture re-arrangement necessitates the postponement of a match in a Dorset & Wilts RFU competition i.e. 2nd and 3rd XV matches.

7. Changes.

The approval of the Administrator is required prior to any change in arrangements for a match not enforced by rules of precedence and permission will normally only be granted for the Sunday of the same weekend. Requests and approvals for such a change are to be confirmed formally in writing or by e mail.

8. Results, Team Lists and Verification.

The Administrator (see list above) is to be notified of the result by telephone by 5.30pm on match day. This is the responsibility of the home club or in the event of a neutral venue for a knockout, the club qualifying for the next round. Match results and team lists are to be entered using the electronic match card.

9. Drawn Matches.

If the scores are level at the end of a match in a knockout 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.

10. Penalties.

The 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 at the discretion of the Administrator. A fine is subject to confirmation by the Competition Working Group to which a club may appeal. An appeal above that level would be to the Chair of the Community Rugby Committee but if confirmed the penalty can be increased.

11. Replacements.

The number of replacements and interchanges is summarised in RFU regulation 13 Appendix 2. RFU regulation will apply to Dorset & Wilts 1st XV– ie 7 replacements - but for all other knock out

matches within Dorset & Wilts no more than 4 replacements will be permitted including all semi-finals. Five or more players in a team are to be Front Row capable as summarised in the table below:

Round	Number of replacements	Number of named Front row in the Squad	Interchanges (up to)
Up to and including Semi-Final	Up to 3	4 (an extra Prop or Hooker)	8
	4	5 (extra Prop and Hooker)	9
Final	5	5 (extra Prop and Hooker)	10
	6	5 (extra Prop and Hooker)	10
	7	5 (extra Prop and Hooker)	12

As per RFU Regulation 13 and World Rugby Law 3

12. 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 Secretary. 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.