



Leicestershire Rugby Union – Age Grade Rugby

County Age Grade Cup/Plate/Colts Cup (U14-U18) Competition Rules and Requirements– 2023/2024

All reference to RFU Regulation 15 Age Grade Rugby include the supplementary information contained within the Guidance to Age Grade Regulation 15 and the RFU AGR Code of Practice – U18 Variations and these 3 documents should be taken together.

1) Organisation and Management of the Competition

- . a) The Leicestershire Rugby Union (LRU) will organise an Age Grade Knockout Cup/Plate competition (for age groups U14–U17) and a Colts Competition 2022/23 administered by the LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary.
- . b) All matches shall be played under the Laws of the Game as published by the International Rugby Board (IRB), any IRB Worldwide Law Trials, RFU Regulation 15 – Age Grade Rugby, which includes the “Half Game Rule” and the Code Of Practice. In addition matches will follow the rules of the County Age Grade Cup/Colts Cup/Plate Competition as set out by the LRU in conjunction with its member clubs.
- . c) Information regarding the organisation and progress of the LRU County Cup/Plate Competition will be produced at regular intervals during the Season and will be published on the LRU web site.
- . d) The format of the competition will be set annually in accordance with the number of entries received.
- . e) In line with good Safeguarding practice all coaches, managers and first aiders must have a valid RFU DBS.

2) Protests, Disputes and Appeals

- . a) Any matters in dispute or any perceived breach of these rules is to be reported IN WRITING to the LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary within 48 hours of the alleged incident. competitions@leicestershirerugbyunion.co.uk
- . b) The LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary and the LRU Age Grade Chair have the power to exclude any club or team from the LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate and Colts competitions organised by the LRU if that club or team has not complied with the Regulations of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) or has not played within the spirit and ethos of the Laws of the Game.
- . c) Initial decisions and interpretations on all matters regarding the organisation and management of the competition will be made by the LRU AGR Competition Secretary.
- . d) There will be an initial informal right of appeal against any such decision to the Chair of the LRU Age Grade Section and a further right of formal appeal against their rulings to the Executive Committee. Any such appeals must be lodged IN WRITING by the appellant club's Age Grade Section Chair at the earliest opportunity and at the latest within 7 days of being notified of any such decision to agrchair@leicestershirerugbyunion.co.uk

3) Membership and Eligibility of Clubs

- . a) The competition is open to any club in membership of the LRU and the Rugby Football Union. In respect of the Colts cup the draw will consist of teams entered into the Leicestershire League.
- . b) It is the intention of the LRU to provide competitive rugby for as many players as possible. To this end, a club may enter 'late' as long as it is within 7 days prior to the date of the start of the competition, and providing there is a team with a bye with whom they can be matched and the competition can be adjusted without disproportionate consequences and/or disruption.

4) Registration and Eligibility of Players

- . a) All Players must be registered a) with the Club they are representing and be registered on GMS and have a valid RFU Player Registration number.
- . b) All players taking part in the LRU Age Grade County Cup/Colts Cup/Plate competition must comply with the age band requirements as defined in RFU Regulation 15.

- . c) Failure to register a player on GMS produce the will be classed as a 'registration offence' and may be subject to the sanction described in section 4h below.
- . d) A player may not represent a club in the competition if he has, in the same season, represented another club in an earlier round of the Age Grade Cup or Plate competition nor may he represent more than one Age Grade team for the same club or another club at all ages. Exception – Players from the same club at U16 level can participate in the U17's County Cup. This replicates a directive for the national schools cup ran by the RFU. – in all regards representation includes being named on the team sheet i.e. the name of the player(s) is entered onto the team sheet whether they played or not.
- . e) There are few circumstances where an over age player can play other than "in very exceptional circumstances, where a young person's safety may be compromised due to a developmental disability (physical or behavioral)" in accordance with the RFU Regulation 15 – Age Grade Rugby including Appendix 2 – U19 Variations. In all cases clubs must obtain the written approval of the Age Grade Chair of the LRU before the overage player participates within a match controlled by these Rules. The club must submit an application, supported by an appropriate assessment, for the playing of an overage player.
- . f) Where players have played a game of rugby on the previous day, a risk assessment should be undertaken by their club and parental consent should be obtained for their participation in an LRU Age Grade County Cup/Colts Cup/Plate game.
- . g) Joint club entries are permitted to allow clubs at a particular Age Grade to jointly raise a team. The players of each club must be registered for their respective club and also be registered with the RFU Rugby First Youth Registration scheme database as "active" players.
- . h) Any team found to be in breach of registration rules may be disqualified from the competition for the season in which the breach of rules occurs.

5) Entry Requirements and Dates of Rounds

- . a) The normal closing date for entries to the LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate Competition will be the 31st August in order that entries can be finalised and the draw made for all Age Grades well in advance of the first round of the competitions for the season – entry forms and fees must be returned to the LRU Youth Competition Secretary by the due date.
- . b) The LRU Age Grade Comps Secretary will fix the date of each Age Grade Cup/Plate Match taking into account the RFU Playing Calendar for the forthcoming season.

- . c) This draw for the LRU County Age Grade Cup will determine opponents in the first round and all subsequent rounds of the LRU County Cup Competition.
- . d) The first named Club to be drawn shall be the Home team in the first round of the Cup Competition – byes will be placed in the ‘away’ slots of the 2nd, 6th, 4th and 8th listed ties (in that sequence) prior to the draw taking place – any preliminary rounds required will be between those teams left ‘in the bag’ when the main competition requirement has been drawn.
- . e) The losing teams in the First Round and Second Round matches in each of the Age Grade Cup Competitions will be automatically entered into the Plate Competition. This will apply where the calendar permits.

7) Entry Fees and Deposits

Entry to the competition is subject to a single non-refundable £30 entry fee per club per team U14's to U17's

8) Fixture Dates, Start Times and Postponements

Other than in the circumstances described below County Cup/Plate matches will normally be played on the designated Saturday Sundays in the published fixture list with a normal start time of 11:00 a.m. The dates and times of County Age Grade Cup/Plate matches will not be changed or postponed unless the new date agreed by the clubs fits into the playing calendar and will not delay the next round.

Where a team fails to fulfil a County Age Grade Cup/Plate match commitment, for whatever reason, then the match will be awarded to the opposition. If this happens in the first round the ‘losing’ team will be permitted to continue in the Plate competition if they wish.

POSTPONEMENTS

- a) Matches may be postponed if in the opinion of the home club the pitch is unplayable and is unlikely to become playable within a reasonable timescale – this decision can take account of future scheduled games and overall pitch welfare.
- b) Matches may be postponed if, in the opinion of the referee, the pitch is unplayable and is unlikely to become playable within a reasonable timescale.
- c) Matches may commence at a later time on the designated date where, in the opinion of the referee, pitches which are not playable at 11.00 a.m. may improve so as to allow a later start time.

- d) Where no independent referee is present the two coaches should attempt to agree on any such postponement or deferral – if either club considers the pitch unplayable or the pitch is unlikely to become playable within a reasonable timescale the match will be postponed.
- e) In the event of a postponed match the two clubs are required to play the match on the next available Sunday (taking due account of the RFU Playing Calendar) – the playing of postponed County Age Grade Cup/Plate matches will take priority over all other fixtures other than RFU organised events.
- f) The LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary reserves the right to impose a date on which a postponed match is to be played if the two clubs are unable to agree a date on which the match will be played.

CHANGED TIMES / DATES

- g) Matches may commence at an earlier or later time on the designated date by prior agreement of both clubs in order to ensure that the matches are played and completed on the designated date (see notification requirements below).
- h) Matches may be played at an alternative location on the designated date by prior agreement of both clubs in order to ensure that the matches are played and completed on the designated date (see notification requirements below).
- i) In exceptional circumstances matches may be played on an earlier date to the designated date by prior agreement of both clubs in order to ensure that the matches are played and completed by the designated date (see notification requirements below).
- j) Where clubs are unable to agree changes as described above the LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary will not arbitrate between clubs and all parties will revert to the original dates and times set out in the LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate Competition.

NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES

- k) In all of the above cases the 'home' team must provide the LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary with reasonable notice of the planned and agreed changes – the LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary may choose not to allow the changes to proceed and will notify the 'home' team accordingly.
- l) In all of the above cases the 'home' team must provide the Leicestershire Society of Rugby Union Referees (LSRUR) Sunday Appointments Secretary with reasonable notice (6 days) of the planned and agreed changes and ask for a suitably qualified referee to be available – if a suitably qualified referee is not available the coaches/managers of the two teams playing can

agree upon a referee who must be suitably qualified.

9) Match Results including Draws

a) In all rounds of the LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate Competition prior to the final, if, after the expiry of normal playing time the scores are level, the away team shall be declared the winner.

b) If the final ends as a drawn match, the trophy will be shared.

c) NO EXTRA TIME will be played in any match played in the LRU County Age Grade Cup /Colts Cup/Plate Competition. The playing time of matches will be as defined for the Age Grade within RFU Regulation 15.

d) If, in any match played within the County Age Grade Cup/Colts Cup/Plate Competition, **the match score is such that one team has a 50 points difference over the other team then the referee will declare the match to be complete.** The match score at this point will be the declared result. With the agreement of the referee and both teams, the match may continue to the end of 'normal playing time' for that Age Grade but any additional scores will not be reported as part of the County Age Grade Cup/Colts Cup/Plate Competition.

e) Where fixtures are forfeited, clubs are encouraged to continue with those fixtures as a 'friendly' through the sharing and lending of players and including Age Grade Cup/Colts Cup/Plate ineligible players provided as always that the requirements of RFU Regulation 15 are followed.

10) Team / Result Sheets

a) Each team coach/manager must complete a current LRU County Age Grade Cup/Colts Cup/Plate Team/Result Sheet clearly stating each player's name, front row capability, RFU registration number and date of birth No result or referee name/signature or opposition signatures required at this point.

b) Each team coach/manager must hand the completed team sheet to the referee at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the match such that the referee is aware of the starting front row players and their designated replacements. It is not the responsibility of the appointed referee to check the eligibility of players listed on the team sheet.

c) Failure to produce and hand to the referee a correctly completed team/result sheet will result in the team, in default, being recorded as having conceded the match – the referee will record this outcome on the opposition team sheet and sign it – the opposition will send the team/result sheet as described below.

d) After the match, the referee will return the team sheet to the manager/coach of each team having duly signed the team sheet and completed the match score.

e) If during the course of the game, the referee has issued any YELLOW Cards or RED Cards, then, following the completion of the game, the referee is requested to complete the appropriate space on the Team/Results Sheet to indicate how many cards, if any, were issued. A yellow card will see the appropriate sin bin in line with the Rules of Play for the age grade. The player sin binned should go to the technical area.

f) In the presence of the referee, the team coach/manager will sign the opposition team sheet and then sign their own team sheet as verification of the final score in the match and to verify the time at which “uncontested scrums” were initiated by the referee and to confirm the number of YELLOW/RED Cards, if any, that were issued against each team.

SENDING IN TEAM/RESULT SHEETS

g) It is the responsibility of an official from each team to notify the LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary of the result of the match by e-mail (preferred) to competitions@leicestershirerugbyunion.co.uk or by text by 6.00 p.m. on the Sunday afternoon of the match.

h) Team sheets will be checked against GMS - if subsequent checking of team/result sheets highlights problems with player registration these will be classified as a ‘registration offences’ and may subject to sanction as described in section 4h above.

11) Squad Sizes and Front Row Issues

a) Squads may be up to 22 in size with up to 7 replacements. Where teams field 22 players there should be at least 6 players who are competent front row players.

b) Where a team fields 19-21 players there should be at least 5 players who are competent front row players.

c) Where a team fields 16-18 players there should be at least 4 players who are competent front row players.

d) Where a team fields 15 players there should be at least 3 players who are competent front row players.

e) Where a team is unable to field a suitably competent front row at the start of the match, they will forfeit the match – clubs are encouraged to continue with these fixtures as a ‘friendly’ through the sharing and lending of players and including Cup/Plate ineligible players provided as always that RFU Regulation 15 – Age Grade Rugby including Appendix 2 – U19 Variations

are followed.

f) On the grounds of Safety and in regard to the welfare of the young players, where a team is not able to field 15 players, including a competent front row, at the start of the match they will forfeit the match – clubs are encouraged to continue with these fixtures as a ‘friendly’ through the sharing and lending of players and including league ineligible players provided as always that RFU Regulation 15 – Age Grade Rugby including Appendix 2 – U14-U18 Variations are followed.

g) If during the course of the match a front row replacement is required and the team nominates, to the referee, for passive scrummages on the basis of insufficient suitably competent front row players being available, where this is inconsistent with the number of front row replacements required in 10a – 10e above in accordance with the squad size then that team will forfeit the match irrespective of the match score at the time the game is stopped – subject to injuries which may have already removed players identified as front row replacements on the team sheet.

h) Passive scrummages may be initiated by the referee, at any time during the match, in the event of safety concerns where one team is so dominant and the welfare of players in the opposition team is highlighted - this will not result in forfeiting the match - the match result at full time will stand. If, during the course of the match, the referee initiates “uncontested scrums” on the grounds of safety, then the referee is requested to note on both team sheets the match time (in minutes) when the playing of the match with “uncontested scrums” was commenced, i.e. if 20 minutes into the first half then 20 should be noted in the designated space, if 10 minutes into the 2nd half then the length of the 1st half for the Age Grade concerned plus the 10 minutes should be noted in the designated space.

i) Front row players who have left the field due to injury to the head, neck, shoulder or back cannot return to the field in another position – clubs found not to have followed this requirement may be removed from the LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate Competition. Headcase Guidelines must be strictly adhered to.

j) RFU half game ruling to be adhered to

12) Venues

a) For all rounds up to and including the semi-finals of the LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate Competition, the venue for the match shall be the ground of the Home Team, unless agreed otherwise by the two clubs concerned and the LRU Youth Competition Secretary.

b) The LRU Age Grade Competitions Secretary reserves the right to organise the match at the away ground or a neutral venue in the event of an unfit pitch at the originally designated

'home' club.

- c) All pitches used in LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate Competition matches will be roped off with no access onto the playing area except for the thirty participating players and the match officials. A club official may be allowed inside the ropes as a 'sponge person'. Team coaches and managers should stay in the technical area during the game. The technical area is defined as being a space at the side of the pitch 10 meters either side of the halfway line of the pitch. The technical area must be on the opposite side to spectators. No adult on the field of play with the exception of identifiable first aiders as required.
- d) Clubs are responsible for the behavior of spectators and in the event of serious misbehaviour clubs will be removed from the competition.
- e) The LRU Age Grade Committee will decide the dates for the finals of the County Cup and County Plate finals taking into account the LRU Youth Structured Season.
- f) The LRU Age Grade Committee will decide the venues for the finals of the Cup and Plate competitions.
- h) Where possible and practical the finals for the Cup Competition for all Age Grades will be played at one venue on the same day with staggered kick off times throughout the day. Where a single date for the finals is not possible the LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary will endeavour to set the dates of the finals on two available Sundays.
- i) Where possible and practical the finals for the Plate Competition for all Age Grades will be played at one venue on the same day with staggered kick off times throughout the day. Where a single date for the finals is not possible the LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary will endeavour to set the dates of the finals on two available Sundays

13)Referees & Touch Judges

- a) Where possible a qualified referee will be appointed by the Leicestershire Society of Rugby Union Referees (LSRUR) for all LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate matches.
- b) Each club is required to provide a person able to perform the duties of Touch Judge for each match except for the final.
- c) A team of three officials may be appointed by the LSRUR Sunday Appointments Secretary for the finals of all Age Grades of the LRU County Age Grade Cup/Plate Competition. The appointed officials may have the use of technology to assist them with their officiating.
- d) It is the responsibility of the home team to confirm the match by 21.00 hours on the Wednesday evening prior to the match with the LSRUR Sunday Appointment Secretary.

e) Where the LSRUR is unable to appoint a referee to the match or the appointed referee fails to arrive at the venue prior to the official start time, the coaches/managers of the two teams playing can agree upon a referee who must be suitably qualified. In the event of a postponed match the match should be re- arranged in accordance with the guidance on postponed matches provided earlier in this document.

f) The LRU Age Grade Competition Secretary and the appointed referee should be notified as early as possible if the match is postponed due to unfit pitches or any other reason.

14)Kit

a) In the event of Clubs having similar coloured playing kit, the home team shall change its colours.

b) All players must have a differing number on the back of their jerseys so that they are clearly individually identifiable by the referee.

LRU Age Grade Competitions Secretary August 2023