

THE NOTTINGHAMSHIRE RFU SECURITY PLUS PENNANT COMPETITION RULES 2016 – 2017

1. Competition Description

The Competition shall be organised by The Nottinghamshire Rugby Football Union for invited Club XV's generally from within the membership of the RFU Constituent Body of Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire and from any other Constituent Body as the Pennant Sub-Committee shall from time to time agree and shall be called The Nottinghamshire Rugby Football Union Security Plus Pennant.

2. Organisation

The Competition shall be organised by the Pennant Sub-Committee, appointed by The Nottinghamshire Rugby Football Union Committee, and their decisions shall be binding and final on any matter not expressly provided for in, or by their interpretation of, these Competition Rules and regulations.

3. Administration

The administration of the Competition shall be delegated by the Pennant Sub-Committee to a Pennant Secretary.

4. Pennant Structure

The Pennant Sub-Committee shall determine, by the 15th June of each year, the Structure of the Pennant for the ensuing season, having due regard to results obtained in the last completed season, Clubs wishes, and the ease with which Club Fixture Secretaries may organise fixtures against Clubs within the same Group of the Pennant structure. There shall be no automatic promotion or relegation of clubs from or to any Group.

5. Pennant Division Positions

5.1 The position of any Club in any Group shall be determined by the awarding of Pennant points as follows:-

- 4 points for an away win – this includes 1 point for travelling away
- 3 points for a home win
- 2 points for a home draw
- 3 points for an away draw – this includes 1 point for travelling away
- 1 point for an away loss – this 1 point is awarded for travelling away

1 try bonus point if 4 or more tries are scored

Home Walkovers will be awarded as 4 points (i.e a home win + 1 try bonus point)
Away Walkovers will be awarded as 5 points (i.e. an away win + 1 try bonus point)

Matches cancelled due to weather and or pitches rendered un-playable by weather conditions and which subsequently remain un-played either in their own right or as a double header shall be deemed to be a 0-0 result with 2 points being awarded to each side.

5.2 In the case of equality of Pennant points, positions within any Group shall be determined on the basis of tries / match points scored. A Club with a greater difference between match points for and match points against, shall be placed higher in a Pennant Group than a Club with a smaller difference between match points for and match points against.

5.3 In the case of equality "pennant points" and equality in "match points difference", a Club with a higher number of match points for shall be placed higher in a Pennant Group than a Club with a smaller number of match points for.

- 5.4 In the case of equality of “pennant points”, “match points difference” and equality of “match points for”, a Club with a higher number of try bonus points shall be placed higher in a Pennant Group than a Club with a smaller number of try bonus points.
- 5.5.1 In the case of equality of “pennant points”, equality of “match points difference”, equality of “match points for”, and equality of “try bonus points” then, unless a winners or runners-up position is involved, and due regard having being taken of all un-played matches, the position in a Pennant Group shall be tied.
- 5.5.2 In the case of a winners or runners-up position being involved, the Club having the greatest aggregate points difference from the matches between the Clubs involved shall be placed higher in the Pennant Group.
- 5.5.3 In the event of equality, a play-off shall be played on a neutral ground to be decided by the Pennant Sub-Committee on a date and at a time acceptable to both Clubs. In the event that no play-off is played, the position in a Pennant Group shall be tied.

6 Fixtures

- 6.1 Each Club shall play each other Club within the same group TWICE per season, once at home and once away (with the exception of prison teams unable to travel and who shall play both matches at home); the kick-off time to be agreed between the Clubs.

In the event that Clubs cannot mutually agree a fixture date the Pennant Sub-Committee shall determine a date which shall be binding on both Clubs.

In the event that H M Prison sides are involved, both teams may agree that one fixture may count as both fixtures and the result be counted twice as if one match had been played at each venue.

- 6.2 All Pennant fixtures shall preferably be played on RFU League weekends. Fixtures which cannot be played on such designated weekends shall be played on dates and at times mutually acceptable to both Clubs.
- 6.3 All fixture dates, times and venues shall be confirmed to the Pennant Secretary by no later than 31 July each year. Dates and venues of fixtures subsequently published in the Nottinghamshire RFU Handbook or the Nottinghamshire RFU Website or on the RFU Game Management System at the commencement of the season shall be deemed to be the agreed mutually acceptable dates and venues.
- 6.4 Any Club failing to fulfil a match due, in the opinion of the Organising Committee, to their position in any Pennant Group being unassailable will be deducted 10 Pennant Points plus all bonus points earned throughout the season.

7 Appointment of Match Officials

- 7.1 It shall ultimately be the Home Club’s responsibility in accordance with RFU Laws of the Game to ensure the appointment of a referee.
- 7.2 Referees should preferably, wherever Society numbers permit, be appointed through the Home Club’s Referees Society.

8. Eligibility for entry into the Competition

Any Club in membership of NLDRFU or any other Constituent Body as the Pennant Sub-Committee may agree, having paid any membership due to the respective Constituent Body and being covered by the RFU Compulsory Insurance cover in respect of the team to be entered, may be invited to enter the Competition and, subject to the payment of the requisite entry fee, (to be determined annually by the Pennant Sub-Committee), shall be eligible to do so.

9 Eligibility of Players

- 9.1 Every Club entering shall abide by the spirit of the Competition and field only bona fide nominated Club XV selections as described in the fixture list.
- 9.2 Except where 1st XV's are permitted to enter this Competition any player representing any Club 1st XV or any higher level Club XV than that to be represented in the Pennant match immediately preceding a Pennant match, shall not be eligible to play in that Pennant match. Any doubt over a player's eligibility to play in a Pennant match should be referred to the Pennant Secretary prior to player selection and no later than at least 24 hours prior to the Pennant match being played.
- 9.3 All Clubs shall maintain complete team records which shall be made available at the request of the Pennant Sub-Committee.
- 9.4 Any Club subsequently found to have been represented by an ineligible player in any match shall be deducted all Pennant points gained together with any positive match points difference gained in the match.
- 9.5 Any Club wishing to raise a post-match matter regarding player eligibility shall do so in writing within 24 hours of the match being played.

10 Notification of Results

- 10.1 All results, together with the number of tries scored by each side, shall be notified **BY BOTH CLUBS**, to the Pennant Secretary within 24 hours of a Pennant match being played.
- 10.2 Clubs failing to return a match result may be penalised at the discretion of the Pennant Sub Committee.

11 Fulfilment of Matches

- 11.1 Clubs shall use their best endeavours to fulfil all scheduled fixtures.

Where any Club cancels a higher ranking pennant fixture but on the same day fulfils a lower ranking pennant fixture then the result of the lower ranking pennant fixture shall be deemed null and void and the opposition in both the higher and lower ranking pennant fixtures shall be awarded a walkover win, and the offending Club will be fined as if neither match had been fulfilled.

Clubs shall not, unless absolutely necessary, postpone or cancel fixtures due to insufficient player availability or lack of front row players.

Clubs will be expected to reasonably adapt to a shortage of player numbers by either team (i.e play 10, 11, 12, 13 a side etc), and to play, if necessary, with uncontested scrummages, if there are insufficient front row players available to commence a match with contested scrummages.

By agreement Clubs may adopt the principle of limited engagement in scrummages whereby scrummages may be contested in the normal manner but neither side may push in excess of 1.5 metres. This must be agreed before kick-off by both teams in the presence of the match referee.

In the event of a player shortage by either team, no match shall commence with either team having in excess of one player advantage over the opposing team. Team Captains shall agree any sharing of players before kick-off. Shared players may not return to their original team without such players being replaced by that team.

Once a match has commenced, both teams shall be deemed to have agreed that the match shall count as a bona fide Pennant Competition match.

- 11.2 In the event of match being postponed for whatever reason, **BOTH** Clubs should immediately advise the Pennant Secretary and at the same time advise which Club is unable to fulfil the fixture, and the re-arranged date where one is agreed.
- 11.3 A financial penalty of £25.00 per match shall be imposed on any Club cancelling a match for reasons which the Pennant Committee consider unreasonable.
- 11.4 In the event that the first match of the two to be played between the Clubs is cancelled for any reason other than weather, then, unless both sides mutually agree on an alternative date for re-scheduling of the original match, the scheduled return match shall be played at the non-offending Club's ground (i.e. the club NOT responsible for the cancellation) and shall be played as a "double-header", and the result, and awarding of points shall stand as if both matches had been fulfilled at the original venues.
- 11.5 In the event that the second match of the two to be played between the Clubs is cancelled for any reason other than weather, then, unless both sides mutually agree on an alternative date for re-scheduling of the match, the first match between the two Clubs shall be deemed to have been played as a "double-header", and the result, and awarding of points shall stand as if both matches had been fulfilled at the original venues.
- 11.6 In any event for the purposes of awarding points in respect of un-played matches:-
(a) no Club responsible for a cancellation shall gain any points whatsoever where a match is cancelled for any reason other than weather related reasons
(b) the Pennant Committee shall have the power to make a decision which shall be deemed to be final and binding on all parties.
- 11.9 **Late cancellations**
Clubs cancelling fixtures any later than 9.00pm on the Thursday immediately prior to the scheduled fixture date will be subject to a financial penalty of £25.00
- 12 **Replacements**
Any Club in a pennant match may name and use up to 5 replacements.
Irrespective of the number of replacements named, replacements may be used on a "rolling" basis utilising not more than a maximum of 10 player interchanges.
NB The "man off" rule does not apply to this competition.
- 13 **All other Matters**
Any matters not specifically referred to within these Rules and Regulations shall be at the discretion of the Pennant Sub-Committee, whose decision on any matter referred to it shall be final and binding.