

NLD RFU Cup Competition – Guidance, Rules and Regulations 2023 - 24

This document has been prepared to provide assistance, guidance and clarity to clubs playing within the Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire Rugby Football Union (NLD RFU) Cup Competitions and should be read in conjunction with the general Rules and Regulations of the RFU.

The NLD RFU Competitions Committee will oversee the organisation and management of the NLD's annual cup competitions for Senior Men, 1st and 2nd XV, Senior Women and Colts. In the event of any confusion or conflict these must be communicated to the NLD Competitions Committee Secretary using the competitions@nldrfu.co.uk email address.

Ultimately the aim of the NLD RFU Competitions Committee is to be as flexible as possible to ensure games get played using its mantra of '...in the interest of rugby!'

i. Objective

The objective of the NLD RFU Cup Competitions is to create local competitive playing opportunities of grassroots rugby which allow clubs to grow and develop their teams and individual players.

The key focus is the player, their development and access to a positive playing experience.

ii. Club Eligibility

Participating clubs must be a member of NLD RFU or of another Constituent Body of the Rugby Football Union (RFU) with approval from their Constituent Body of the RFU to participate in the NLD Competitions.

Following best practice, participating clubs must have a completed a first aid risk assessment in line with RFU Regulation 9 and provide suitably trained and qualified Club First Aid personnel at each fixture.

All NLD Clubs will be permitted to enter eligible teams for the appropriate Competition.

Men's Senior teams playing in RFU League, Counties 3 Leagues and above, will play within the NLD's 1st XV Competition.

Men's Senior teams playing in Merit Leagues, Counties 4 Leagues and below, Social Rugby or other non-RFU Leagues will play within the NLD's 2nd XV Competition.

Women's teams who played the season at National Challenge 1 or 2 are permitted to enter the NLD's Women's Cup.

Women's teams who played the season at National Challenge 3 and below are permitted to enter the NLD's Women's Plate.

Non-NLD teams playing alongside NLD Clubs within MROC Leagues will be eligible to apply to enter the NLD Competitions however acceptance will be based upon availability of places within the 1st XV Competition.

Non-NLD Clubs playing Merit level rugby, and in particular those playing in NLD Merit Leagues, will be eligible to apply to enter the NLD Competition however acceptance will be based on availability of places within the 2XV Competition.

All teams must be listed against their respective Club on GMS as all fixtures and results will be managed on GMS.

iii. **Competition Structure**

1st XV Competition

All entered and accepted teams will be seeded according to their RFU Level and then as necessary by performance at the time of the draw.

A maximum of 4 tiers will exist within the competition, Cup, Shield, Plate and Bowl, with a maximum of 16 teams per tier.

The competition will be run on a knockout basis.

The Competitions will be organised to run at the end of the season and as soon as other priority fixtures are completed.

2nd XV Competition

All entered and accepted teams will be seeded according their Merit Level and then further seeded as necessary by their perceived performance at the time of the draw.

There will be 2 tiers for the first round of the competition, Cup and Plate, with a maximum of 16 teams per tier.

After the first round each tier will be sub-divided based on winners and loser;

In the Cup tier the winners will proceed to the Cup Quarter Finals

In the Cup tier the loser will proceed to the Shield Quarter Finals

In the Plate tier the winners will proceed to the Plate Quarter Finals

In the Plate tier the losers will proceed to the Bowl Quarter Finals

Thereafter the competition will be run on a knockout basis.

The Competition is designed to run during the Merit League Season with Finals at then of the season.

Women's XV Competition

All entered and accepted teams will be seeded according to their RFU Level and then as necessary by performance at the time of the draw.

The Women's Cup will be played as a simple knockout competition starting this season at the Quarter Finals stage.

The Women's Plate will be start at the Semi Final stage with the aggregated winners of a 2-leg round, home and away, of fixtures proceeding to the Finals for this season.

Colts XV Competition

Details will be issued separately by the Colts Lead of the NLD Competitions Committee as required.

iv. Competitions Format

For all Competitions matches will be played in accordance with the [World Rugby Laws of the Game](#), the [RFU Regulation 6](#) and applicable Organising Committee unless stated below.

For the Men's Senior 2nd XV Competitions in line with [RFU Regulation 6.52 & 6.53](#), 'Game On' principles will be applied.

For the Women's Senior Competitions all games will be in accordance with RFU Regulation 6 including the application of the [Under 19 clauses as provide by World Rugby](#) as noted in [Regulation 6.51](#) unless otherwise explicitly stated in these Rules and Regulations.

For the NLD Women's Plate Competition in line with [RFU Regulation 6.52 & 6.53](#), 'Game On' principles will be applied.

Where fixtures are played under the Game On! Principles the 'Player Off' principle will not be applicable as this is incompatible with utilisation of the 'Game On' principles [Regulation 6.66](#).

Additionally in the Men's Senior 2nd XV Competition all games will be played in accordance with the NLD RFU Merit Tables 2023-24 Regulations v2.

For all Competitions a 50 score point variance limit is to be maintained. Should the score point variance exceed 50 points then the game should be temporarily halted, the score at that point recorded as the fixture result and the game restarted and completed using Game On! Principles.

During the Knockout stages of any competition should the result, at normal full time, be a draw then an additional 10 minutes each way will be played. Should the match remain drawn at this point, the winner of the match will be the team that has scored the most tries. If this does not produce a winner, the team that has scored the most conversions from tries will be declared winners. If this still does not produce a winner or the score is 0-0, the away team shall proceed to the next round.

All fixtures will be entered on GMS and the use of Match Cards is required.

v. Player Eligibility

For Senior Men's 1st XV Cup Competitions, players will only be eligible to play in teams as governed by the Rules and Regulations permitted for that level of game as issued by their respective League and Organising Committee; e.g. for Counties 1 level those issued by [MROC](#).

For Senior Men's 2nd XV Competitions, players will only be eligible to play in teams as governed by the NLD RFU Merit Tables 2023-24 Regulations; [specifically Rule 1.a – 1.e](#).

For the Women's Senior Competitions, no player who has played more than 3 times during the season in a team which played in National Challenge 2 or above may play in a Plate Team Competition.

If any Club / Team is unsure whether a player is eligible for selection to a match day squad they must consult the Competition Secretary in advance for clarification and approval.

For Colts Competitions the applicable selection criteria for weekly Colts fixtures will remain in force.

The fielding of ineligible player may result in formal disciplinary action being taken against the offending Club.

vi. Disputes

- a) Any Club wishing to raise a post-match matter – e.g. a dispute - they shall do so in writing within 24 hours of the match being played; such communications should be sent to the NLD RFU Competitions Committee Secretary using competitions@ndrfu.co.uk.
 - b) The complaint must be submitted on Club headed notepaper, signed by the lead complainant and countersigned by the Chair and/ or Secretary of the Club.
 - c) The NLD RFU Competitions Committee will be the sole arbitrator of all disputes and the decision of this committee will be final.
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vii. Other

- a) The NLD RFU Competitions Committee reserve the right to make amendments to the NLD RFU Cup Competitions Rules and Regulation and / or Guidance Documents.
- b) All communications must be addressed to the NLD Competitions Secretary – competitions@ndrfu.co.uk – whilst communications regarding NLD RFU Fixtures may be addressed to the Fixtures Secretary – fixtures@ndrfu.co.uk.