



NLD RFU Merit Tables

Guidance 2022 - 23

This guidance document has been prepared to provide assistance to clubs playing within the Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Lincolnshire Rugby Football Union (NLD RFU) Merit Tables and should be read in conjunction with the NLD RFU Merit Table Additional Information

The NLD RFU Competitions Committee will oversee the organisation and management of the NLD RFU Merit Tables. In the event of any confusion or conflict please contact christopherbrookes@rfu.com lizfletcher@rfu.com or office@nldrfu.co.uk . Ultimately our aim is to be as flexible as possible to ensure games get played.

i. Objective

The objective of the NLD RFU Merit Tables is to create local competitive playing opportunities which allow clubs to grow and develop their teams and individual players throughout the season.

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).

Following best practice, participating clubs must have a completed first aid risk assessment in line with RFU Regulation 9.

iii. Structure

The NLD Merit Tables will be made up of three groups – Central, West and East. The groups are established with best geographical fit and travel distances in mind.

The NLD RFU Competitions Committee will perform a mid season progress review by the end of November of the 2022 – 23 season, with a view to making adjustments to the structure and/or format if required to ensure the NLD RFU Merit Tables remain appropriate for clubs and their players. A review will also be performed at the end of the season to inform the 2023 – 24 season. Player and club feedback, fixture scores and game completion rates will be used as part of these reviews.

iv. Format

All matches must be played in accordance with the World Rugby Laws of the Game. In line with RFU **Regulation XX**, Game On principles may be applied in non-RFU Competitions (including merit tables and friendlies), therefore where possible, teams should utilise the Game On framework to ensure their fixture is played.

Teams will play everyone in their group home and away. All games must be played in the spirit of England Rugby's [core values](#) of the game.

The following will also apply:

1.	Player Eligibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) All players should be affiliated to the RFU through their club via the Game Management System (GMS) system.b) Players do not have to be 'effectively registered' to take part in the NLD RFU Merit Tables.c) A player from a higher level may take part only when mutually agreed by both teams on their appropriate and safe inclusion. This is to help to maintain the right playing experience.d) Regulation 15.6 Playing Adult Rugby must be adhered to.
2.	Squad Sizes & Front Row Replacements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) There are no limits on squad sizes.b) When there is a shortage of players it is advised games commence applying relevant aspects of the Game On framework.c) If a team has a large squad, the use of the half game rule is encouraged (a Game On principle), as is lending players to opposition and other teams to give players time on the pitch.d) It is not compulsory to have a front row replacement and, if necessary due to lack of experienced front row players, part or all of a match may be played with un-contested scrums with no detrimental effect to the result.
3.	Player Borrowing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Player borrowing is permitted where it means the fixture is played.b) In the first instance the priority should be borrowing from your opposition on the day.c) Should players be borrowed from teams outside of your fixture, these players must be declared in advance of the fixture to your opposition.
4.	Substitutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Rolling substitutions are permitted, the number of changes is unlimited.b) Teams are encouraged to ensure all players get appropriate pitch time. i.e. half a game.

5.	Match Dates & Kick Off Times	<p>a) Matches will be scheduled to be played on Saturdays.</p> <p>b) <u>Teams may mutually agree to move a fixture to a different day/date.</u> The home team must ensure they let the merit table organisers and the appropriate referee society know once a change of date and time has been agreed.</p> <p>c) Kick off times can be mutually agreed. Where teams cannot agree matches shall kick off at 3pm except for those matches played in November, December, January, and February, which shall kick off at 2pm.</p>
6.	Unplayed, Postponed or Abandoned Matches	<p>a) Where possible teams should utilise the Game On framework to keep the fixture on. Both teams <u>must</u> agree which of the Game On principles will apply to the match and notify the referee at least 30 minutes prior to kick off.</p> <p>b) In the event of a host venue pitch being unplayable due to weather, it is recommended that the fixtures is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. switched to away team venue b. moved to alternative venue c. postponed and new date agreed. <p>c) If a game is abandoned after 40 minutes of play, the result will stand.</p> <p>d) Where there is a genuine need to cancel or a postpone a fixture, the club are asked to communicate to their opposition, referee society and merit table organiser at the earliest opportunity. (Please see point 10)</p>
7.	Score Reporting and Match Day Form	<p>a) The first named team on a fixture is responsible for entering the result onto the Game Management System (GMS) using electronic match card (EMC).</p> <p>b) Each team/club must have a nominated results inputter with the correct GMS access. (The inputter will need to have the 'match card administrator' GMS role).</p> <p>c) Inputting team line ups on the EMC is <u>not</u> compulsory for the NLD RFU Merit Tables.</p> <p>d) Ideally results will be submitted no later than the day after the fixture.</p>
8.	Referee Appointments	<p>a) The home team is responsible for making every attempt to organise with the local Referee Society to appoint a Referee, otherwise a qualified Referee must be used.</p> <p>b) Teams must notify the Referee at least 30 minutes prior to kick-off of any Game On flexibilities being applied to the fixture.</p>
9.	Fulfilment of Fixtures	<p>a) Teams are encouraged to fulfill <u>all</u> fixtures.</p> <p>b) Completion of fixtures will be routinely monitored by the merit table organisers and a team's place in the merit tables will be reviewed as necessary.</p> <p>c) All fixtures should be played before end of April.</p>

10.	Points System	<p>a) Fixture points will be awarded to teams as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 points for a win • 1 point for a draw <p>b) Bonus points will be awarded to teams for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoring of 4 or more tries • A loss within 7 points <p>c) Points will be deducted for non weather related cancelations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 point deduction for the cancellation of a fixture after 23:59, 2 days before the match day and before 23:59 1 day prior i.e. playing on a Saturday, notification of a cancellation after 23:59 on the Thursday and before 23:59 on the Friday. • 3 point deduction for the cancellation of a fixture after 23:59, 1 days before the match day. i.e. playing on a Saturday, notification of a cancellation after 23:59 on the Friday. • It is responsibility of the club cancelling the game to be able to evidence the agreed kick off times in the case and any cancellation, or dispute regarding a cancelation. Where evidence is not able to be supplied, the above points deduction will be applied. <p>e) A maximum 50 point score differential is advised. If this occurs, teams are encouraged to mix teams up and play existing time as a friendly.</p>
11.	Table Positions	<p>a) Should more than one team have the equal points the following criteria will be used to determine table positions:</p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">I. Away wins II. Home wins III. Tied placing</p>
12.	Communications	<p>a) Each team should have a minimum of 2 representatives on their merit table WhatsApp group.</p>
13.	Disputes	<p>a) Any Club wishing to raise a post-match matter shall do so in writing within 24 hours of the match being played.</p> <p>b) The NLD RFU Competitions Committee will be the sole arbitrator of all disputes and the decision of this committee will be final.</p>
14.	Other	<p>a) The NLD RFU Competitions Committee and Merit Table Organisers reserve the right to make amends to the NLD RFU Merit Tables and Guidance Document.</p>