

43 Mini & Youth

4301 Description & Aims

- 1 All matches shall be played under the laws of Rugby Football and comply with the Rules and Regulations of the Rugby Football Union, where appropriate.
- 2 Within County these shall be the New Rules of Play for all Age groups covered by the Pilot & New Rules for all County organised Competition except as may be agreed by the Youth Committee
- 3 Outside of County & in Friendlies these shall be the New Rules or Old Rules or a combination thereof as agreed between teams keeping Child Safety as a priority
- 4 Our young people want to play & enjoy as much rugby as possible; in all Mini/Midi/Youth Competitions the adults involved are there to facilitate this & should work with both their players & the opposition to achieve maximum game time & enjoyment for all. All rules/regulations should be read with this understanding – rules/regulations are not intended to be used to prevent /avoid/claim the win from games but to encourage fair games.
- 5 The Union shall provide Trophies, for the winners of Cup Competitions and for the League Winners. Winning Clubs shall be responsible for the insurance, safekeeping and the engraving of the Trophies. Medals will be provided for Cup and League winners and for runners up.
- 6 The aim of Youth Competitions is
 - to promote participation in competition rugby at the Under 7 to Under 16 age groups
 - to improve player development, enjoyment and retention
 - to produce winners of the various trophies as set out above

4302 Organising Committee

- 1 Youth Competitions shall be organised by the Youth Competitions Sub Committee (which shall be made up of the Youth Committee appointed Organiser(s) and Youth Chair), which may issue administrative instructions in amplification of this Regulation.
- 2 All communications from Clubs relating to Competitions are to be addressed to the appropriate Organiser(s) whose details shall be promulgated in the Union Handbook, on the website and in Appendix 4 to this document.
- 3 Except where otherwise stated, the decision of the Sub-Committee shall be binding and final on any matter not provided for in and on the interpretation of this Regulation.

4303 Eligibility of Clubs and Seeding

- 1 All Hampshire Clubs with mini/midi/youth sections shall be eligible to enter County Mini/Midi Festivals & Youth Knock-Out /Leagues
- 2 Unless otherwise agreed with the Organiser, a Club may only enter one team for Mini/Midi Festivals but can contribute different players to a Barbarians side if requested to by another Club or the Organiser
- 3 Notwithstanding that priority will be given to ensuring all eligible clubs who wish to enter one team are able to, and to the efficient operation of the competition, and with the agreement of the Organiser(s), a Club may enter more than one team in the Youth Cup/Leagues.
- 4 Where deemed appropriate by the Sub Committee the Knock-Out Competition & Leagues will be seeded to provide appropriate matches at each level seeding normally being decided on performance in the preceding season's Competitions (seeding structure in Appendix 1).
- 5 If a Club declines to take its place in the level allocated in the League it will be allowed to enter at a lower level. In League Competitions promotion & relegation will be by agreement.
- 6 Not more than one XV of a Club shall be placed in any one Table.
- 7 Applications from paid-up Associate Clubs from neighbouring counties to join Youth Competitions will be considered by the Sub-Committee providing this is of benefit to Hampshire's Clubs.

4304 Eligibility of Players

- 1 Only bona fide members of a Club who are registered with the RFU at that club may represent, i.e. either play or be selected as replacements for, the Club in these Hampshire Competitions.
- 2 Once players play for a Club in a Hampshire Competition, they may not play for any other Club in that Competition in the same season, other than in exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Sub-Committee.
- 3 Player/s with formal dispensation to play out of age grade may enter Hampshire Competitions at the dispensated age grade – both the Organiser of that Competition & the opposition should be made aware of the dispensated player/s. All aspects of RFU Regulation 15 & guidance notes must be followed. Signed playing out of age grade forms should be available on the day of the game should there be any queries.
- 4 Any infringement of 4304.1 to 4304.3 may result in disqualification by the Youth Committee from a Knock-Out or League Competition of the player and the Club involved for the season and the Club may be disqualified from the Knock-Out or League Competition in subsequent seasons.

Infringement of RFU Age Grade regulations will result in Club & Individual Disciplinary proceedings.

5 To meet the aim of retention of players, all Clubs must endeavour to get games played for the benefit of all the players concerned. To achieve this, it is permissible for spare players to be loaned to the opposing Club if it has less than a full team on the day of a Knock-Out/League match.

6 If a match is played with such players then the Team Managers should agree beforehand whether the result will count. If no such agreement can be reached the match shall be declared void and the Organiser in consultation with the Sub-Committee shall decide how competition points are to be awarded or in the case of the Knock Out Cup who shall be declared the winner or whether a new date for the match be set.

7 In the spirit of these competitions where a Club enters more than one team it is expected that players regularly selected for one team will mainly remain with that team. If there is an objection the match shall be declared void and the Organiser in consultation with the Sub-Committee shall decide how competition points are to be awarded or in the case of the Knock Out Cup who shall be declared the winner.

NB this is not intended to reduce movement of players as skills develop but to monitor the potential for bolstering a team in a lower competition with players from a higher competition

4305 Formats

1 Full time shall be called:

- In Mini/Midi games when the try difference is 6
- In Youth games when the points difference is 35

The rest of the game time shall be played as a friendly with the winning side adjusting the number/quality of players on the field or by playing players out of position or with such amendments to the game rules as shall make a more even contest & more enjoyable game for all.

2 Front row & front row replacements are not mandatory in Hampshire Competitions. Matches may start without penalty with uncontested scrums if a fully trained and competent front row is not available on either side & they may move without penalty to uncontested scrums at any time if a team is no longer able to field a trained and competent front row for any reason.

NB It is hoped, however, that wherever possible a match will be played with contested scrums so that all the players may gain satisfaction from the game.

Mini/Midi U7 – U12

- 3 Age Grade Festivals shall be played in seeded Pools of up to 6 teams
- 4 Each Pool shall play a round-robin format
- 5 The 1st team in each pool shall be drawn against each other & progress to Semi-Finals & Finals (& so on for 2nd/3rd/4th/5th/6th)
- 6 Highest Runners Up will be used where Pool sizes differ to fully populate the higher competition Semi Finals/Finals unless a team ask to remain in the lower competition
- 7 Teams are to bring sufficient squad members & rotate the team to avoid overplaying players in accordance with RFU regulations

Knock-Out U13/U14

- 8 Usual Knock-Out procedure will apply. A multi-tiered competition will be played in order to ensure all clubs play a similar number of games. Finals and 3rd/4th place play offs will be held for each tier. An outline is contained as Appendix 2. This may be subject to change from time to time by the Sub-Committee. The Organiser in consultation with the Sub-Committee may issue further guidance.
- 9 Results shall be recorded as W/D/L

League U15/U16

- 10 Competition points will be awarded as follows:

Fixture played	1
Win	4
Draw	2
Loss	0
Losing Bonus where by 10 or fewer points	1

NB Max PD recorded shall be 35

- 11 The position of a Club in a League Table will be decided on the total of its Competition points
- 12 Positions will be determined only from those Clubs which have completed at least 50% of their fixtures. See also 4314.

13 If one or more Clubs have the same Competition points the following method shall be used to determine the league position. For the U15s League, the winner of the post-Christmas match between the two teams shall be given the higher league position. If this match was drawn the position shall be shared. For the U16s League, the aggregate score of the matches between the teams (as moderated by the 35 point win margin limit) shall determine the position. If the aggregate score is zero then the league position shall be shared. If any additional calculation is needed this shall be decided by the Committee.

14 If a match is played under non-standard arrangements as permitted within this Regulation then the Team Managers/Captains must agree beforehand whether the result will count for the Competition.

4307 Dates

1 For Knock-Out/League the fixture dates are play by dates & can be re-arranged with the agreement of both Clubs. If no such agreement can be reached the original date shall stand other than where in exceptional circumstances and at the sole discretion of the Organiser in consultation with the Sub-Committee an alternative date is agreed always provided it does not compromise the efficient operation of the Competition - but see 4307.3. For avoidance of doubt, for the U15s League all pre-Christmas matches, as set out in the published fixtures, must be played before Christmas

2 Should a date be changed the initiating Club must then inform the Organiser.

3 Every effort shall be made to avoid dates where County/Divisional Activity is known – however this is not always known in advance & all Clubs have equal potential to be affected; although such a clash of dates is not sufficient reason to demand a change of Knock-Out/League dates Clubs will be expected to use reasonable endeavours to re-arrange any date to avoid such clashes..

4308 Colours

1 In the event of a clash of colours the home team shall change subject to the satisfaction of the referee.

2 The jerseys of Youth teams should be numbered to ensure correct identification of players and replacements during a match; however no team shall be penalized for not wearing numbered shirts.

4309 Replacements/Substitutes

1 Rolling substitutions are allowed & encouraged in all Hampshire Competitions.

2 There is no maximum squad size for Competitions.

4310 Kick-off Time

1 Mini/Midi Competitions shall be as published by the Organiser – Clubs should endeavour to stick to these to prevent Tournaments over-running.

2 Knock-Out/League kick-off times shall be agreed between teams. Due consideration & accommodation shall be given to Isle of Wight & Channel Island teams to facilitate their travel arrangements. Home Clubs should inform the visiting team of the kick off time at least 8 days before the fixture.

4311 Venues and Grounds

1 All games involving Channel Islands Clubs shall be played on the mainland unless the mainland Club agree to travel in which case the Channel Island Club shall offer to refund all or a previously agreed proportion of travel costs to the Island for the mainland Club. Such costs are as would be reasonable for the number of players & substitutes allowed in that Competition plus three from Coaches/1st Aider/Officials. Costs to and from the point of embarkation or dis-embarkation are to be met by the mainland Club.

2 All Clubs shall make fulfilling fixtures with Vectis RFC a priority home & away. Should clubs fail to honour fixtures this will be investigated by the Organiser in conjunction with Chairs and Directors of Rugby of both clubs to determine whether any sanction should be handed down to either of the age groups or clubs.

3 In the rounds of the U13s/14s Knock Out competitions the home team shall be the highest seeded team unless otherwise agreed between the two teams in which case the Organiser must be notified by the initiating Club before the fixture is fulfilled. Where two teams who are not seeded are due to play each other the first named team on the published fixture list shall be the home team, unless otherwise agreed as set out in this section.

4 The venue for teams in the finals and 3rd place play offs for the U13s/14s Knock Out competitions shall be decided by a neutrally observed toss arranged by the Organiser & notified by them to both teams. Matches must be played at the determined venue unless it is agreed between the two clubs that an alternative venue should be used.

5 The Home Club is responsible for correctly and clearly marking its pitch, ensuring it is of a size that complies with RFU Regulations, and it must make proper provision for safety as in RFU Regulations, In the interests of safety, and to ensure adequate access for touch judges, reasonable endeavors should be made to rope or cone off an area along the length of the playing area set back from the touch line outside the field of play. Normally only coaches, managers, first aiders, touch judges, players who are taking part in the match at that time, or about to be brought onto the pitch as replacements, and the referee should be within this area.

6 If a late decision (i.e. a decision made or to be made within three hours of the scheduled kick-off time) as to the fitness of the pitch is necessary, it shall be made by the Team Managers of the teams concerned. If they are unable to agree the match shall be declared void and the Organiser in consultation with the Sub-Committee shall decide how competition points are to be awarded or whether an alternative date should be set for the match.

7 At all times there should be easy accessible entry for an ambulance to the pitch and ready access to a telephone (ideally a mobile telephone at pitch side). Team Managers must be aware of the ground post code to assist the emergency services and the home Club's emergency procedures. There should also be access to suitable facilities to meet the medical and safeguarding needs of players, officials and spectators, including changing, shelter, washing and toilet facilities.

8 Home Clubs are strongly recommended to ensure that a person appropriately trained in First Aid/Immediate Care in accordance with the RFU guidance on First Aid cover is present throughout the match. This can be provided by the opposition but it is the Home Clubs responsibility to organise.

9 Home Clubs should confirm arrangements with the away Club at least 8 days before the fixture.

4312 Referees and Assistant Referees (Touch Judges)

1 The Home Club must provide a suitably competent & experienced Referee (preferably one not associated with the age group) for all Knock-Out/League games unless otherwise notified by the Organiser. This can be provided by the opposition but it is the Home Club's responsibility to organise.

2 Each team shall provide one touch judge to help the Referee The role of touch judge should be limited to identifying when the ball has left play and when it has crossed the cross bar for a conversion or penalty.

3 In the Cup Final of the Knock Out Competitions Clubs should use reasonable endeavours to use a neutral referee. If necessary the Organisers will try to assist in this.

4313 Drawn Matches

1 Mini/Midi during rounds no extra time shall be played if the full time score is level then the team that scored the first try shall progress as the winner. If no tries have been scored a coin toss shall determine the winner.

2 Knock-Out during rounds no extra time shall be played if the full time score is level then the team that has scored the most tries shall progress as the winner. If a result is still not forthcoming then the away team shall progress as the winner.

3 Mini/Midi & Knock-Out Final no extra time shall be played. If the full time score is level then both teams shall share the honours.

4 League no extra time shall be played league points shall be awarded for the draw.

4314 Postponed and Abandoned Matches

1 80% Rule - If a match is abandoned when 80% of the pre-agreed game time has been played then the score at the moment of abandonment shall stand.

2 The referee's decision as to the necessity for abandonment and the number of minutes played at the time of abandonment shall be final.

3 The only acceptable reason for not playing a Knock-Out/League match on the stated or agreed weekend shall be unacceptable adverse weather or pitch conditions.

4 If conditions prevent a Knock-Out/League match being played or the match is abandoned because of such conditions, with less than 80% having been played, it shall be played or replayed at the first available date, at the direction of the Organiser.

5 If a Knock-Out/League match is drawn at 80% played then 4313.2 shall apply. If less than 80% played then the match shall be rearranged as in 4314.4.

6 See 4307.3. If agreement on a date change has not been reached, and if the reason for not playing is outside a Club's control then the Organiser in consultation with the Sub-Committee shall consider what action to take. It is the responsibility of the relevant Team Manager to inform the Organiser, and the opposition if a match is to be cancelled.

7 In the event of the unavoidable cancellation of a match because of weather conditions, or if a match is abandoned because of such conditions or because of any other safety or disciplinary reasons before 80% has been played, and the match cannot be re-scheduled it shall be void and no competition points awarded. For Knock-Out the away team shall progress as winners.

8 If any other reason for not playing a match is acceptable to the Organiser, and the match cannot be rescheduled, the match shall be void and no competition points awarded. For Knock-Out the away team shall progress as winners.

9 If the reason for not playing a match is not acceptable to the Organiser, the non-offending Club will count the match towards their 50% and will be awarded Fixture played & Win points. In the case of matches involving Vectis an investigation as set out in 4311.2 will be undertaken. The match shall be recorded as "not played" against the offending Club and match points may be deducted. The Organiser will determine any points deduction. If the final position of another Club could be affected by such an award then the match points of a game which actually took place involving the offending Club and the affected Club may be discounted at the sole discretion of the Organiser.

Late Cancellations

10 Regardless of the fact that it may be possible to re-arrange a match, late cancellations cause unnecessary expenses and aggravation to Clubs & players on both sides. If a Club is responsible for a late cancellation, providing this is communicated to the Organiser & the opposition before 2100 on the Thursday evening, the match shall be void and no competition points awarded. For Knock-Out the non-offending team shall progress as winners. For League the non-offending team will count this as a match towards their 50% of fixtures completed and will be awarded Fixture played & Win points. If a match is cancelled after 2100 on the Thursday, 4314.8 and 4314.9 apply.

4315 Notification of Results

1 The winning Club shall inform the Organiser or their nominee of the result of the match by emailing scanned copies of completed match cards signed by an official from each side and the referee within 24 hrs of the game being played.

2 Failure to notify the correct result within the above timescale could mean, at the Organiser's discretion, disqualification of the Club (for Knock-Out their opponents shall proceed to the next round), or for clubs in a League, the deduction of competition points.

4316 Finance

1 Each participating Club in the Mini/Midi, Knock-Out or League Competitions shall pay an entrance fee, which shall be determined annually by the Youth Committee & ratified by the Governance Committee. This fee will be invoiced at the beginning of the season (with the annual Club subscription).

4317 Protests, Disputes and Transgressions

1 Seeding objections to be made within 2 weeks of Fixture publication

2 Eligibility of Players

i Before the Game

If a Club has a doubt about the eligibility of an opposition player (4305) this must be raised as soon as possible with the opposition Team Manager. If necessary, the concerned Club should refer their protest immediately by whatever means to the Organiser, or to any other member of the Committee who may be present at the game. His decision shall be final and is not subject to appeal. The match result will stand.

ii During or After the Game or if the Organiser or no Committee member is present or able to reach a view

The concerned Club must refer their protest by whatever means to the Organiser. He shall have discretion to resolve any such protest and shall inform all interested parties of his decision as soon as possible (see 4305.6). This decision may be subject to appeal. The match result may be declared void.

3 Other Matters in Dispute or Alleged Transgressions of this Regulation.

i Any other matters in dispute or any alleged transgressions of this Regulation must be referred by whatever means to the Organiser within 48 hours of the end of the match. This must be supported by a written complaint which must reach the Organiser and other interested parties within a further 48 hours, setting out the grounds of the complaint in full. The Organiser has the authority to resolve any such complaint and shall inform the interested parties of his decision.

4 Appeals

i If a Club wishes to appeal against the decision of the Organiser, the appeal must be lodged with the Youth Committee Chair within 48 hours of receiving the decision and confirmed in writing within a further 48 hours. The Youth Committee has the authority to resolve any appeal and the Chair shall inform the interested parties of the decision.

ii If a Club wishes to appeal against the decision of the Youth Committee, the appeal must be lodged with the Executive Director within 48 hours of receiving the decision and confirmed in writing within a further 48 hours. This appeal will be considered by the Management Committee at their next scheduled meeting if time permits or by the Officers if not. Their decision shall be final.

4318 Terms and Conditions of Participation

1 Applications for entry to the Competitions are to be forwarded to the Organiser by the 18 May in any given year.

2 If any Club, having entered, does not take part in the Competition or, having participated, fails to honour subsequent fixtures in the Competition, then such Club's opponents in the Knock-Out Round as drawn will receive a bye into the next Round of the Competition without prejudice to any further action that may be taken by the Committee.

3 No fines shall be issued for withdrawing from Competitions after the fixtures are announced but no refund shall be made.

4 Any appeal shall be dealt with as in 4317.3

5 Regulation 1 is also relevant.

Appendix 1 Seeding U13s/U14s

U13s – normally the highest performing 8 teams in the previous season's Hampshire Tournament will be seeded, other than as determined by the Organiser in consultation with clubs

- 1 Cup Winner (1st tier competition)
- 2 Cup Runner Up
- 3 Cup 3rd Place
- 4 Cup 4th Place
- 5 Bowl Winner (or 2nd tier completion if another name is used)
- 6 Bowl Runner Up
- 7 Bowl 3rd Place
- 8 Bowl 4th Place

Other teams will be unseeded

(If no Bowl 3rd/4th place play off takes place then losing semi-finalists will be seeded 7 and 8 in alphabetical order)

U14s – seeded as follows taking account of the previous seasons U13s' results

- 1 Cup Winner (1st tier competition)
- 2 Cup Runner Up
- 3 Cup 3rd Place
- 4 Cup 4th Place
- 5 Bowl Winner (or 2nd tier completion if another name is used)
- 6 Bowl Runner Up
- 7 Bowl 3rd Place
- 8 Bowl 4th Place

Other teams will be unseeded

Appendix 2 U13s/U14s Fixtures and Competition Structure

The competitions will be multi-tiered. The number of tiers will depend on the number of teams entered into the competitions.

The Competition structure outlined below is based upon 20 teams entering. The Organiser, in consultation with the Sub-Committee, may amend the structures should a different number of teams enter either competition.

Level 1 – Cup

- Preliminary Round of 8 unseeded teams (4 matches). 4 unseeded teams, as drawn by at least 2 members of the Sub-Committee, to have a bye to Round 1
- Round 1 – 8 seeded teams, plus 4 winners from Preliminary Round, plus 4 unseeded teams with a bye from the Preliminary Round (8 matches)
- Quarter Finals –winners from Round 1 (4 matches)
- Semi Finals –winners from Quarter Finals (2 matches)
- 3rd/4th Place Play off – losing Semi-Finalists (1 match)
- Final – winning Semi-Finalists (1 match)

Level 2 – Bowl

- Semi Finals – Losing Cup Quarter Finalists (2 matches)
- 3rd/4th Place Play off – losing Semi-Finalists (1 match)
- Final – winning Semi-Finalists (1 match)

Level 3 – Plate

- Round 1 - Losers from Cup Preliminary Round and 4 of losers from Cup Round 1. 4 Cup Round 1 losing teams, as drawn by at least 2 members of the Sub-Committee, to have a bye to Round 1 (4 matches)
- Quarter Finals –winners from Round 1 plus 4 teams with bye (4 matches)
- Semi Finals –winners from Quarter Finals (2 matches)
- 3rd/4th Place Play off – losing Semi-Finalists (1 match)
- Final – winning Semi-Finalists (1 match)

Level 4 -Shield

- Semi-Finals - Losing Plate Quarter Finalists (2 matches)
- 3rd/4th Place Play off – losing Semi-Finalists (1 match)
- Final – winning Semi-Finalists (1 match)

Level 5 – Vase

- Semi-Finals Losing Teams from Plate First Round (2 matches)
- 3rd/4th Place Play off – losing Semi-Finalists (1 match)
- Final – winning Semi-Finalists (1 match)

In each round of the U13s/U14s the following arrangements for fixtures will apply

- The Organiser and at least 1 member of the Sub-Committee will make the drawer for the Cup Preliminary
- For subsequent rounds the highest seeded team will play the lowest, 2nd highest the 2nd lowest etc. Unseeded teams in Round 1 and beyond will be regarded as being seeded in alphabetical order (below seeded teams)

Appendix 3 – U15 and U16 mini leagues

- Mini leagues comprising 4, 5 or 6 clubs will be formed for U15 competitions based with full transparency on the final positions/seedings from the previous season's U14 competition.
- Clubs entering the U15 mini leagues without a seeding from the U14 competition will be allocated a place in one of the mini Leagues at the Organiser's discretion.
- Teams in each U15 mini league will play each other once prior to the Christmas break (mid-season) with an equitable share of home and away fixtures.
- Promotion and relegation will be decided by the Organiser, based on performance/merit, and revised U15 mini leagues and fixtures will be drawn up for the second half of the season.
- Once again, teams in each U15 mini League will play each other once prior to the end of the season with an equitable share of home and away fixtures. Clubs remaining in the same mini league will have the corresponding fixture venue reversed in the second half of the season.
- All mini league matches are to be played by 30th April.
- At the end of the U15 season the organiser will once again decide on promotion and relegation based on performance/merit for the commencement of the U16 season.
- For the U16 season mini Leagues will be drawn up by the Organiser. There will be no promotion or relegation at the mid-season point. Instead teams in each in mini league will play each other both home and away.

Appendix 4 Contacts for 2016/17 season

- Gary Self garypself@aol.com – Over all responsibility and Minis
- Shaun Mildenhall shaun@solvarchitects.co.uk – U13/14s
- Dai Bugler dai_b@hotmail.com – U15s/16s