Age Grade Northumberland County Competition Rules for the 2025-26 Season

AGE GRADE FESTIVAL AND COMPETITIONS RULES 2025-26

Our Aims –

1) To Give players the opportunity to experience competitive rugby across Northumberland.
2) To encourage teams of all abilities to enter the Northumberland County Cup.
3) To make Northumberland Cup fixtures a special match for players to learn from and develop their skills and knowledge of Rugby Union.
4) To highlight the core values of Rugby Union from players, coaches, officials, and supporters.

County Competitions – U13**,** U14, U15 and U16

Northumberland RFU run County Competitions for age grade rugby.

No clubs can run any form of regulated activity without prior authorisation from the CB.

At the start of each season the Age Grade Committee will request applications for the County competitions. A draw will be made by the Age Grade Committee and the fixtures will be published on the CB website.

The Core Values of Rugby Union

Rugby Unions' values of **Teamwork**, **Respect**, **Enjoyment**, **Discipline** and **Sportsmanship** are the elements that makes our game special for those who enjoy the culture they create. They define our game and are central to how we operate the Waterfall Festivals and County Competitions. If these sound like the values you (or your players) would like to develop in a safe and stimulating environment, then please enter the Northumberland Age Grade Competitions.

Clubs should observe fair play both on and off the pitch and celebrate those who are generous in victory and dignified in defeat. We play to win, but not at all costs. We recognise endeavour as well as achievement. The wellbeing and development of individual players is central to all of our rugby activity.

NORTHUMBERLAND COUNTY COMPETITION RULES

- RFU Regulation 15 must be complied with.
- Matches are to be played on the fixture dates specified by Northumberland RFU unless special authorisation is given.
- It is the responsibility of the home club to confirm with the opposition and the referee the day and date of the Age Grade fixture and an appropriate kick-off time.

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- The home club to provide a pitch of suitable dimensions and in suitable condition on which to play.
- Both sides should give priority to the fixture date and make their teams available to play on the fixture date.
- It is the responsibility of both clubs to provide at least three hours' notice should the game have to be postponed.
- The RFU Age Grade Laws and Law variations must be followed in all inter-club matches.
- Age group is determined in accordance with RFU regulations.
- Any team must play with the minimum number of players. Matches must be played with equal numbers of players. If teams agree, the loaning of players between two sides playing each other is permitted.
- Combined and Cluster teams are welcome to enter the competitions. CB paperwork must be completed a minimum of seven days before the date of the first round.
- Clubs can enter more than one team into each age grade competition. Clubs should endeavour to enter mixed ability teams. Players cannot move between teams.
- There are no maximum squad sizes.
- Regulation 15.12 “Half game rule” will apply. Any difficulties with this rule, please contact Age Grade Committee for further guidance.
- Players can only represent one club. Any difficulties with this rule, please contact Age Grade Committee for further guidance.
- It is important that teams respect each other. We ask clubs to respect the competition by providing a good quality pitch, with pitch side barriers to keep the players safe. Kick-off times and match hospitality must reflect the distance travelled by the opposition.
- It is the responsibility of the home club to appoint a qualified referee. It is mandatory that the match day official has an RFU referee qualification. Any difficulties with this rule, please contact Age Grade Committee for further guidance.
- If BOTH teams mutually agree a PRIOR date that does NOT conflict with any other structured season event for that age group they may submit the request to the Chair of Youth at least 7 days in advance of the requested game date for approval to play on that date. The organisers can refuse the request and the decision is final.
- Should a team not be available on the date allocated they will be awarded a 35-0 loss.
- Should the match be cancelled due to pitch or weather conditions, the home venue should be switched if possible. If this is not possible, the match should be re arranged within seven days or with age grade committee approval to a spare competition date if available. If none of these are possible, the match will be awarded as a 10-10 draw with the team remaining in the group identified by a coin toss conducted by the Age Grade Committee.
- In the event of a major weather event or similar, the organisers may agree that all matches unable to be played on a date can be played on an alternative date set by the organisers, this becomes the effective play on date for those remaining games. If no date is available due to other conflicts the round can be omitted and games moved to the next round date.
- As per Regulation 15.11.3 Matches must stop should a winning margin of 50 points difference be reached. This is the result that stands.

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- All results must be reported via the County WhatsApp chats no later than seven days after the match has been played.
- There is NO extra time or Replay option. The team scoring the most tries progresses to the next round. Should both teams have scored the same number of tries then the AWAY team will progress.