

The Somerset RFU Cup & Vase Regulations 2022/23

DEFINITIONS: Club/Team means club or team entitled to take part in the competition.

Committee means the Competitions Sub-Committee of the County Union.

Competitions Organiser means the person to whom the Committee delegate the administration of the Competitions.

County Union means the Somerset County Rugby Football Union Limited.

Home Club is defined by Regulation 4.8

R.F.U. means the Rugby Football Union.

Society means the Somerset County Rugby Football Union Referee's Society Limited.

Weather Conditions shall be deemed to include but not be limited to bad or inadequate light as decided by the match Referee.

World Rugby means the world governing body of the game of which the Union is a member.

World Rugby Regulations means the Resolutions and Regulations relating to the game promulgated by World Rugby from time to time.

DESCRIPTION AND FORM

1.1 the Competitions shall be called "The Somerset R.F.U Cup, The Somerset R.F.U. Vase and, if required, The Somerset R.F.U Bowl" (The Competitions). These Rules apply to all of these Competitions.

1.2 All matches in the Competitions shall be played under the World Rugby Laws of the Game and the Regulations of World Rugby and the R.F.U current at the commencement of the Competitions in so far As the same are not varied by or inconsistent with the Regulations. Where there is any conflict between the World Rugby and/or the R.F.U Regulations and these Regulations then these Regulations shall prevail.

ORGANISING COMMITTEE

2.1 The Competitions shall be organised and administered by the Committee.

2.2 The Committee shall have the power to delegate any of it's duties , powers or obligations under these regulations to a Competitions Organiser.

2.3 Subject to the provisions of Regulation 13.2 decisions of the Committee shall be final and binding on any matter not provided for in and on the interpretation of these Regulations.

ELIGIBILITY OF CLUBS/TEAMS AND PLAYERS

3.1 The Cup Competition will be open to the top 12 member clubs of the County Union who are not participating in any R.F U. Cup Competitions which for 2022/23 is named the Papa John's Cup. The qualifying teams shall be decided by the Committee once entry by Clubs 1st XV's to the R.F.U. Cup competition has been declared and will be decided taking into account their position in The English Clubs Rugby Union Championship at a date to be decided by the Committee before the end of the current season. However with regard to a University or College that does not take part in The English

Clubs Rugby Union Championship then the Committee may in its absolute discretion place that team in the Competitions after giving due consideration to its playing strength. The remaining teams are eligible for the Vase and Bowl if they wish to enter.

3.2 Any Club wishing to participate must signify its wish to do so to the Competitions Organiser by the date set by them. In the interests of promoting participation in the competition there will be no requirement to lodge a Bond.

3.3 The Competitions will proceed with the number of clubs that have signified that they wish to enter.

3.4 In the event of a club or team unjustifiably failing to fulfil a fixture the Committee may exclude it from the Competitions.

3.5 A club shall only play or select as replacements players who on the date of the match are bona fide members of that club. In the case of a club that is a University or College they shall only play Eligible Participants as defined by the British Universities & Colleges Sport Regulations.

3.6 A club shall not be represented in the front row of a scrummage by any player under 18 years of age whether the scrummage is contested or uncontested.

3.7 A club shall not be represented by a player who has either played or been selected as a replacement for another club in the Competitions. However any player who has played or been selected as a replacement by another team from the same Club may be play or been selected as a replacement in that team.

3.8 A club may select up to seven replacements/substitutes. If the match squad of twenty two players then it must contain five players capable of playing in the front row. (Rolling substitutions are allowable to a maximum of 12 interchanges).

3.9 In the interest of safety each team playing in each match in the Competitions must have at least five players in their nominated match squad, all at least eighteen years old, who are suitably trained and experienced to be capable of playing in the front row to ensure that on the first or second occasions (whether due to injury or consequent to a player(s) being temporarily suspended or ordered off) that a front row player is required to be replaced, the team can continue to safely play with contested scrums.

3.10 If in any match on the first or second occasion any front row player requires to be replaced and his team cannot provide a suitably trained and experienced replacement player at least eighteen years old to play in such position in the front row of the scrum to enable the teams to continue to safely play with contested scrums (the referee having made enquiry of and confirmed this fact with the captain of the team or such other person nominated by the Club as the manager or other person responsible for the team) the match will continue with uncontested scrums and the offending team will be prevented from replacing the injured player(s). Subject to Regulation 3.13 below the final result will stand.

3.11 Subject only to the proviso contained in Regulation 3.12 below if in any match in the Competitions on the third or subsequent occasion any front row player requires to be replaced and his team cannot provide a suitably trained and experienced replacement player to enable the teams to continue to safely play with contested scrums (the referee having made enquiry of and confirmed this fact with the team captain or other person nominated by the Club as manager or other person responsible for the team) the match will continue with uncontested scrums and subject to Regulation 3.13 below the final score will stand.

3.12 Where a player or players is/are temporarily suspended from the field of play (which includes a blood injury) which creates a third or subsequent occasion that a front row player needs to be replaced and his team cannot provide a replacement or other player aged eighteen years of age or

older suitably trained and experienced to enable the team to safely play with contested scrums the referee having made enquiry of the team captain (or other person nominated by the Club as manager or responsible for the team) of the side affected the match shall continue with uncontested scrums (but such uncontested scrums shall only continue for the duration of the temporary suspension). The match result will not be deemed to be invalidated by reason of part of it being played with uncontested scrums.

3.13 The Committee will review the circumstances in every case where a match in the Competitions is completed with uncontested scrums. The Committee will be entitled to take any such action as it deems appropriate (such action may include reversal of the match result, a fine and/or disqualification from the Competitions in the Season and/or the following season, the inclusion of the non-offending team in the next round of the Competitions) where the Committee finds that there has been a breach of any Regulation governing the Competitions or that a Club in a match in the Competitions acting other than in good faith has taken advantage of the provisions of this Regulation 3.3 and in particular 3.10 and 3.11. Note: The intention of Regulations 3.9 to 3.13 (Inclusive) is to penalise Clubs who try improperly to take advantage of a situation to ensure a match is played (or finished) with uncontested scrums.

THE COMPETITIONS FORMAT AND DRAWS

4.1 The Competitions shall comprise two stages with the first being pools of six teams following which there will be knock-out semi-finals and finals matches between the qualifying teams from each pool.

4.2 The composition of each Pool will be determined by the Committee based on the position of each team in The English Clubs Rugby Union Championship at the date determined by the Committee and on their geographical location in order to minimise any excessive travel and encourage local interest as much as possible. Clubs who have entered their 1st XV's into the R.F.U Papa John's Cup will not be able to enter those teams into the Somerset Competitions and Clubs whose 1st XV's play in National Leagues will only be allowed to enter their lower XV's into the relevant level at which they play which will be determined by the Committee. The final structure of the Competitions will be decided by the Committee following the final date for entry into the Competitions.

4.3 The pool stages will comprise two home matches and two away matches and these will be determined by the position each team in a pool is allocated by a draw. The first team drawn will be allocated to the first place in the pool and the second drawn to the second place etc until all six teams have been drawn and allocated to a place in the pool. Fixtures will be as determined by a matrix predetermined by the Committee and will result in each team in a pool playing four of the other five teams in a pool on a home or away basis. The fixtures will be published accordingly well before the end of the league season.

4.4 The semi-finals and finals shall be played at neutral venues as determined by the Committee unless otherwise agreed by the clubs and the Competitions Committee as and when appropriate.

4.5 All matches shall be played on the dates fixed by the Competitions Committee that will be published accordingly.

4.6 The Cup shall comprise of the top 12 teams as determined by the Committee remaining outside of the R.F.U. competition split into two pools of 6 teams.

4.7 The Vase shall comprise of the next 24 teams in the Somerset leagues as determined by the Committee and will be split into two pools in the North and two pools in the South based on current divisional splits already in place.

4.8 In the Cup competition the winners of each pool shall play the second placed side from the other pool and vice versa in a semi-final and the winners of each of those matches shall contest the final. The Home Club will be designated by the Committee.

4.9 In the Vase competition the winners of each pool in the North shall play each other in a semi-final and the winners of each pool in the South shall play each other in a semi-final and the winners of those matches shall contest the final.

4.10 Matches in the Competitions take precedence over all other fixtures save for those in the English Clubs Rugby Championship and R.F.U. Competitions.

4.11 A match may be played on a date in advance of the date fixed by the Committee but only during the preceding weekend set by the Committee or at a different venue if both clubs agree in writing to that effect at least 48 hours before the match is due to take place and such arrangement(s) have been approved by the Competitions Committee.

N.B Clubs must bear in mind the effect of any re-arrangement(s) on the availability of Match Officials.

4.12 Where a club has two or more teams entered into the Somerset Competition pools the higher level team takes priority if there are insufficient numbers of players available to complete both fixtures. If the higher level team does not play their fixture and the lower level team does then the lower level team result will be declared null and void with the points being awarded to both the opposition side(s) in each competition.

4.13 There will be no opportunities to postpone matches other than for an English Clubs Rugby Union Championship match or any R.F.U. organised Cup Competition match.

4.14 Where there is a clash of fixtures requiring more than one pitch and a mutually agreed alternative venue between the sides cannot be found the higher placed team of the home side will take precedence and be required to complete their fixture with the teams at the lower level each being awarded two points for the un-played match. There will be no postponement allowed to a later date.

4.15 Where a match cannot be played due to a weather event each team will be awarded two points each. The match will not be postponed to a later date.

4.16 Teams failing to fulfil a fixture with no valid reason in the opinion of the Competitions Committee will be deemed to have forfeited the fixture with five points being awarded to the team which the Committee decided is the non-offending team.

4.17 Pool matches may be played on a date in advance of the fixed date or at a different venue if both clubs agree in writing to that effect at least 48 hours before the match is due to take place and such rearrangement(s) has/have been approved by the Competitions Committee. Note: Clubs must bear in mind the effect of any re-arrangement(s) on (i) the following rounds of the Competitions to ensure that they are not unnecessarily delayed and (ii) the availability of Match Officials (ii) matches must be played on the same date as previously stipulated by the Competitions Committee.

4.18 Pool placings will be determined on a points basis with points awarded as follows:

- 4 points for a win
- 2 points for a draw
- 0 points for a loss
- 5 points for a walkover (which includes a single bonus point).

In addition to the above a bonus point will be awarded in pool matches as follows:

- If a team scores four or more tries in any match
- If the team loses the match by 7 points or less.

The Semi-Finals and Finals will be straight knockout matches

DRAWN MATCHES

5.1 In the Semi-Finals and Finals if after 40 minutes of play each way the scores are level, there shall be a five-minute break. After this break, the teams will change ends and there shall be a period of extra time between the teams of 10 minutes each way, with a one-minute interval. If the scores are then still equal, the team that has scored the most tries shall be the winner. If this does not produce a result, the team that has scored most goals from tries shall be the winner. If no result is then achieved, the result shall be decided in the following manner. Each team shall nominate one player from its number on the field of play at the final whistle to participate on its behalf in a "sudden death" place kicking Competitions. Each kicker in turn shall attempt a place kick from pre-determined positions until such time as after an equal number of attempts one kicker has kicked more goals than the other. These attempts will be made towards the goal posts (determined by the Referee) and the first kick shall be taken by the team that kicked off at the commencement of the match. The attempts will be taken from the following positions (in turn) repeating the sequence until a decision is reached: -

- a. The centre of the 22m line.
- b. Intersection of the 22m line and 15m line to the left of the posts facing.
- c. Intersection of 22m line and 5m line to the left of the posts facing.
- d. Intersection of 22m line and 15m line to right of the posts facing.
- e. Intersection of 22m line and 5m line to the right of the posts facing.

POSTPONED AND ABANDONED MATCHES

6.1 If weather conditions prevent a match being played or a match is abandoned because of such conditions with less than 60 minutes having been played it shall be played or re-played before the date of the next round on a day and at a time agreed by the two clubs concerned and by the Committee. If there is no agreement within 4 days of the date of the match which was not played or abandoned or 22 if the date and time agreed between the two clubs is not acceptable to the Committee, the date and kick-off time will be as directed by the Committee upon the application of either club.

6.2 If a match is abandoned because of weather conditions when 60 or more minutes have been played then the score at the moment of abandonment shall stand and be deemed the final score in the match. The Referee's decision as to the necessity for abandonment and the number of minutes played at the moment of abandonment shall be final.

6.3 If the Referee finds it necessary to abandon a match for any reason other than weather conditions, then, irrespective of the number of minutes played, the result of that match will be determined by the Committee.

GROUNDS

7.1 The home club (other than in the semi-finals and final) is responsible for correctly and clearly marking its pitch. In addition, it must make proper provision to ensure that (with the exception of the touch judges, fourth official, doctor or first aider/other suitably medically qualified person and one water carrier from each club) all spectators, replacements, coaches' replacements and others are kept at a reasonable distance from the field of play.

7.2 When a late decision (i.e. a decision made or to be made within 3 hours of the scheduled kick-off time) as to the fitness of a pitch for the playing of a match is necessary, it shall be made by the respective captains (or nominated representatives) of the clubs involved, but if the captains are not able to agree, an opinion as to the fitness of the pitch shall be made by the appointed referee. Note: The referee's responsibility is limited to deciding whether or not the pitch is in his opinion playable. Any decision reached that a game should or should not commence is the decision of the Clubs concerned.

7.3 The home club must ensure full compliance with RFU Regulation 9 with particular reference to Regulation 9.3 - Pitch-Side First Aid and Immediate Care Provision for all matches details for which can be found on the England Rugby website at www.englandrugby.com. under the Participation heading - Player Welfare - Rugby Safe links.

MATCH OFFICIALS

8.1 The Society shall appoint or arrange for the appointment of match officials for all matches. The home club shall be responsible for liaising with (i) the appointed match officials as to the match arrangements (ii) the Society at the earliest opportunity in relation to any proposed change in the match arrangements and (iii) with the appointed official(s) directly to ensure that such official(s) is/are aware of rearrangements and has/have the appropriate directions to the venue of the match (or any change of venue).

CLASH OF COLOURS/IDENTIFICATION OF PLAYERS

9.1 In the event of clubs having similar or clashing colours, the home away club shall be responsible for changing its colours subject to the satisfaction of the appointed referee.

9.2 The jerseys of teams competing in the Competitions shall be numbered in accordance with World Rugby requirements to ensure the correct identification of all players and replacements during a match.

KICK-OFFS AND DELAYED ARRIVALS

10.1 All scheduled matches shall start at the time notified by the home club to its opponent club not less than 3 days prior to the match, and shall be between 2pm and 3pm on weekends and public holidays and between 7pm and 8pm on weekdays. An alternative kick off time may be agreed by the Committee. A kick-off time may be specified by the Committee if upon appeal by the opponent club the Committee deems the time specified by the home club unreasonable. Any delay in kicking-off from the pre-determined time may be reported by the nonoffending club to the Committee which may impose such penalty as it sees fit.

NOTIFICATION OF RESULTS

11.1 The Secretary of the club qualifying for the next round is responsible for informing the Competitions Administrator of the result of a match within 48 hours of the conclusion of the match.

11.2 Match cards will be required for each team in each match with players details being scrutinised against the relevant GMS/EMC database. Each match result card must specify the result of the game including number of tries scored for each side and a list of the players and replacements involved and must be signed by a club official and the match referee. Results will be processed onto GMS.

FINANCE

12.1 Semi Final and Final matches only in the Competitions shall be "gate taking" matches and shall be "all pay" save for those attending who are under 16 years of age. The gross receipts from the Ssemi-Finals and Final shall be delivered to the Competitions Administrator who shall deduct proper expenses and the balance shall be divided as to one third to each of the participating clubs and one third to the County Union.

12.2 To encourage participation in either of the competitions there will be a winner's prize of £300 and a losing finalists prize of £150 awarded to the relevant teams.

PROTESTS, DISPUTES AND TRANSGRESSIONS

13.1 Due to the constricted timetable available to complete these competitions there will be no recourse to allow any complaints of alleged breaches of these regulations to be made. However should any breaches come to light in the course of reviewing any matches the Committee in their absolute discretion shall be the final and only arbiter of any matter arising.

13.2 There will be no right of appeal once the Committee have in their absolute discretion decided on any matter arising upon which a ruling has been taken.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

14.1 Each club in consideration of the monies received by it from the County Union or any funding from a sponsor(s) whether or not received direct from the sponsor(s) or any third party for participating in the Competitions agrees that by commencing its first match in the Competitions it has entered into a legally binding obligation with the County Union and separate obligations with each other club in the Competitions and with any sponsor(s) of the Competitions that it will fulfil its fixtures in the Competitions, comply with these Regulations and will indemnify any club which suffers loss due to failure to fulfil a fixture subject to the duty of the loss sustaining club to mitigate its losses so far as reasonably practicable.

14.2 Any club agreeing to play in the Competitions agrees that by entering or commencing its first match in the Competitions it has entered into a legally binding obligation with the County Union, any sponsor of the Competitions and as a separate covenant with each other Club in the Competitions, Referee, Touch Judge or Match Official involved in any match in the Competitions or cancellation or abandonment thereof that it will not hold liable or make any claim against such official, the Committee or the County Union:-

for any loss charge compensation or expense arising out of or in connection with any kind of injury or illness suffered by any player, spectator or other person,

for any damage to property of any kind,

for any other loss, cost, charge, expense or damages be it financial or consequential loss of profit or additional expense incurred or otherwise and whether directly or consequential or in relation to the result of any match, arising out of or due to any decision or action that may be taken under the Laws of the Game these Regulations or any other rules or regulations published by 25 26 the RFU or in respect of the normal procedures to hold, play, control or abandon a match.