

RULES FOR THE EASTERN COUNTIES (EC) YOUTH COMPETITIONS

UNDER 19'S AND U17'S CUP & SHIELD

1. These rules are the rules of the EC Under 19's and Under 17's competitions, hereafter referred to as "The Competitions". Where any EC sponsorship is in place for the Competitions clubs are expected to honour these obligations to the fullest extent possible.
2. The Competitions shall be controlled by the Eastern Counties Competition's Committee. The Committee shall have full powers to deal with all disputes and transgressions including the power to disqualify any participating Club which may infringe any rules of the Competitions. Day to day running and organisation of the youth competitions shall be delegated to the Competition Organiser.
3. All matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws, Bye-laws and Resolutions of the Rugby Football Union and the 'Spirit of the Game'.
4.
 - (a) The Competition Organiser shall invite entries from all eligible clubs within the Eastern Counties for the under 19 and under 17 competitions. Entries must be received in accordance with the timescale published each year.
 - (b) In addition to the two Cup competitions, on an experimental basis for season 2007/8, and assuming there are sufficient entries, there will be two new competitions, the U19's Shield and the U17's Shield.*
 - (c) Clubs may enter one team into **either** the Cup or Shield competition at each age group.*
 - (d) It is intended that the Cup competition should attract the stronger teams within the C.B and the Shield competition will give an opportunity to those clubs who have historically been deterred from entering the Cup competition by the strength of the opposition to participate in a meaningful competition.*
 - (e) It is for each club to decide which competition they wish to enter. Should the Organiser feel that an entry is inappropriate he will refer this matter for adjudication by a committee comprising the three Youth Chairmen of the Sub Counties chaired by the Competition Organiser.*
5.
 - (a) As an experiment for season 2007/8, it has been decided to allow two clubs to combine their playing strength at one or more age groups in order to enter the E.C Shield Competitions.*
 - (b) Clubs wishing to take advantage of this concession should advise the E.C office of their intentions and apply for a special entry form which will need to be signed by the relevant officials of each club*
 - (c) Players participating in the competition as part of a combined team must be registered for one of the relevant clubs in accordance with rule 9.*
 - (d) Combined sides may only enter the Shield competitions at either or both age groups.*
6.
 - (a) When the total entry figures are known the final format will be decided. Clubs will have already been notified of the dates earmarked for the competitions in the structured season. There may be a requirement to use additional dates depending on the number of entries received. In this case clubs are required to mutually agree such dates with their opponents within the overall framework of the Competitions.
 - (b) Assuming the numbers allow, the normal format for each competition will be two or more mini leagues with the winners and runners up of each mini league progressing to the semi finals of each competition. In the case of insufficient entries being received the Competition Organiser will advise clubs of the format to be adopted.

(c) *The composition of each mini league shall be determined having due regard to the previous season's playing records of each participating club and any other known pertinent factors. Such judgments will be determined by a committee constituted as in rule 4 (e) above.*

(d) If, once the mini league fixtures have been completed, it is needed to separate teams on an equal number of points for the purposes of progression to the semi finals, the difference between points scored and points conceded shall be the determining factor. If two teams are still equal, the results of the matches played between the two teams shall determine progression. In the event of the teams still being equal, a play off match will be arranged if timescales allow. As a last resort, lots will be drawn.

(e) The winners of each mini league will have home advantage in the semi finals. They will play the runners up of the opposite league.

7.

(a) *If any club fails to fulfill a fixture on the due date without good cause the match shall be awarded to their opponents and a score of 15-0 will be recorded against the transgressors.*

(b) Any requests to postpone or re-arrange fixtures for good cause must be made to the Competition Organiser no later than seven days before the match is due to be played stating the full reasons for the request. Should such a request be granted, the team making the request should re-arrange the game with their opponents for the earliest mutually available date. THE OPPONENTS, EC OFFICE AND ANY REFEREE WHO HAS BEEN APPOINTED MUST BE INFORMED BY THE REQUESTING CLUB OFFICIAL OF ANY AGREED POSTPONEMENTS OR CHANGES AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE OPPORTUNITY.

(c) In the case of postponement due to weather conditions the home team official must provide as much notice as possible to the visiting team and referee, if applicable, in order to prevent wasted journeys.

8. Kick off times for all matches except the Final may be mutually agreed between the clubs. If agreement cannot be reached, matches will kick off at 11.00 a.m. The finals of all competitions will kick off at 2pm.

9. Any semi finals that may be necessary will be drawn at a meeting of the EC Competitions committee. The dates for the semi-finals and final are specified in the structured season.

10. The winners of the finals will receive the Eastern Counties U19 or U17 Cup or Shield and will hold it for one year EXCEPT insofar as 14(c) shall apply.

11.

(a) All players must have been registered with the RFU before participating in the Competition. All players must be under 19 on 1st September of the current season for the U19's competitions or under 17 on 1st September of the current season for the Under 17 competitions.

(b) Any player registered by a club who has played for that club in an Eastern Counties Under19 or Under17 Cup or Shield game shall be ineligible to play for any other club in either competition for the remainder of that season.

(c) A player shall be deemed to have played for a club if his name has appeared on an official team sheet as a player or replacement.

12.

(a) Official team sheets will be issued by the Competition Organiser before the start of each season's competitions.

(b) A maximum of twenty two players per team may be nominated for each match. Seven of these players may be available as replacements in accordance with the Laws and Resolutions of the Rugby Football Union. *The squad should include three players trained and eligible to act as*

front row replacements. The completed team sheet showing the starting teams and replacements must be available to the referee BEFORE the commencement of the match.

(c) In accordance with Rule 6 of the Schools and Youth Regulations, 'a player who has been substituted may replace any player whether or not that player has been injured'.

*(d) On completion of a match, the **home** club team official should enter the result and score on the team sheet and obtain the signature of the away team official and match referee to verify these.*

*(e) The **home** club team official must dispatch completed team sheets to the EC Administrator as soon as possible to arrive no later than the Wednesday following completion of the match.*

13. Failure to comply with the rules relating to player registration and team sheets without reasonable excuse may result in sanctions against the transgressing club at the discretion of the Eastern Counties Competitions Committee. Such sanctions may include points deduction from mini leagues or exclusion from the remainder of that season's competition. In the case of the semi finals or final, the match or trophy may be awarded to the transgressing club's opponents.

14.

(a) In line with the ERFSU rules, the maximum score difference in any youth game is 50. In Cup games when the score reaches this figure the game is technically over. (It is the recommendation of the Eastern Counties Committee and provided that both teams agree that, for the remainder of the match, the sides should be evened up).

(b) In the semi-finals, if at fulltime, the scores are level, the team that has scored the most tries shall go forward to the Final. If this does not produce a result, the team that has scored most goals from tries shall go forward to the Final. If the scores, the tries and the goals from tries be equal, the away team shall be declared the winner.

(c) In the Final, if after 35 minutes of play each way the scores are level, the match shall be declared a draw. the trophy will be shared and held by each club for a period of six months. Both Clubs shall be awarded a plaque.

(d) If it is required to produce an outright winner, for the purposes ONLY of progress to another competition, the procedure applied to the semi finals as defined in Rule 12 (b) will be applied; the Eastern Counties Under 19 or Under 17 Final shall still be recorded as a draw.

15. Clubs participating in the Semi-Finals and Final are to submit the names, dates of birth, *squad photograph in digital form*, and playing positions to the Competition Organiser one week prior to the matches. From these details match programmes will be assembled.

16.

(a) For all matches in the Competitions except the Semi Final and Final the home team shall be responsible for arranging a referee qualified to the appropriate standard. Wherever possible, the match referee should not be a member of or affiliated to the home club. If touch judges are not appointed each club will provide a competent person to fulfill this role.

(b) In the case of the Semi Finals and Finals of the competition the E.C Administrator will arrange referees and, wherever possible, touch judges.

17. In the event of Clubs having similar or clashing colours, the home team will be responsible for changing its colours. The referee's decision on the suitability of colours shall be final.

18. The host Club is responsible for the proper promotion of the matches, including correctly and clearly marking the pitch and providing barriers to ensure spectators are kept a reasonable distance from the field of play.

19. At the final all monies, including money collected from admission, sale of programmes and car parking, taken or otherwise collected from the spectators at each match (bar and catering takings excepted) shall be divided equally between the Clubs participating in the match. The host Club shall, within 14 days of the match being played, send to the visiting Club (with a copy sent to the Competitions Organiser) an account of the said monies together with a remittance in respect of the amount due to the visiting Club.

20. For the purposes of nomination for entry to the RFU U17 Age Grade Club Competition, the Winner and Runners Up in the U17 Cup competition will be nominated for the Divisional Cup and Plate Competitions respectively. The losing semi-finalists will play a third place play off match to determine entry to the Bowl and Shield Competitions. Home venue will be drawn by the Competition Organiser.

21. Any matter in dispute, or claimed transgression of the rules, shall be referred immediately to the Competition Organiser, by telephone if necessary, provided confirmation in writing or by e-mail follows within 48 hours.

For Season 2007/8 the Hon. Competition Organiser is:

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