



**England
Rugby**

County Championships

**WOMEN'S COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIPS
(2018-19)**

WOMEN'S COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITIONS REGULATIONS 2018-19

(A) Name and Organisation

1. The Competitions shall be called the Gill Burns Division 1('Division 1') and the Gill Burns Division 2 ('Division 2') or such other name or names incorporating the name of a sponsor as the RFU shall determine.
2. The Competition will be organised by the RFU Rugby Growth Department in partnership with the County Championship Committee. The RFU Rugby Growth Department shall have the power to delegate any or all of its powers, duties or obligations under these Regulations to such person or persons as it may decide.

(B) Definitions

1. In these Women's County Championship Competitions Regulations:

“**The Committee**” shall mean the Organising Committee as constituted each season.

“**Residence**” for a full-time bona fide student whilst attending a recognised educational establishment shall mean either her permanent home address or her (for the time being) student accommodation address;

2. In addition, except where the context otherwise requires or permits, the words and expressions listed in the Definitions set out in RFU Regulation 1 shall bear the meanings given to them therein.

(C) Format of Women's County Competitions

1. Division 1 shall be contested between the 13 participating counties. The 13 Counties will be split into one pool of 4 teams and three pools of 3 teams.
 - (i) Each team will play the other teams in its pool once only either at home or away
 - (ii) The winners of each pool will contest the semi-finals of Division 1 and the winners of the semi-finals will contest the final of Division 1.
2. Division 2 shall be contested between the 15 participating Counties and will be divided into three pools of 4 and one pool of 3.
 - (i) Each team will play the other teams in its pool once only, either at home or away
 - (ii) The winners of each pool will contest the semi-finals of Division 2 and the winners of the semi-finals will contest the final of Division 2
3. All matches shall be played in accordance with World Rugby Laws and Regulations (including any such Law trials or variations to which the RFU may agree) and RFU Rules and Regulations insofar as they are applicable save where such RFU Regulations are in conflict with these County Championship Competitions Regulations in which event these County Championship Competitions Regulations will prevail.
4. The RFU Rugby Growth Department will determine the composition or changes to the composition of all the pools, the fixture schedule, the draws and venue for the Women's Division 1 Final and Division 2 Final.
5. In pool matches the winner of each match will receive 4 competition points. If a match is drawn, each team will receive 2 competition points. Teams will receive 1 Bonus competition point if it scored 4 or more tries in a match. Teams will receive 1 bonus competition point if it loses a pool match by 7 match points or less. The winner of the pool will be the County with the most competition points after all matches in the pool have been played.
6. In the case of equality of competition points, positions in the pool shall be determined firstly by the number of wins and draws achieved in the Competition and then on the basis of match points differential in the Competition. A County with a larger number of wins shall be placed higher than a County with the same

number of competition points but fewer wins. A County with a larger number of draws shall be placed ahead of a County with a fewer number of draws. If Counties have equal competition points and equal number of wins and draws then a County with a larger difference between match points “for” and match points “against” shall be placed higher in the Division than a County with a smaller difference between match points “for” and match points “against”. Should two Counties have the same number of competition points, the same wins and draws, and the same match points difference, the County having scored more match points “for” shall be placed higher in the pool than the County having the lesser number of match points “for”. If this still does not establish the positions then the positions of the Counties involved shall be determined by a toss of a coin.

7. In the event of a draw in the semi-finals or finals, there will be no extra time and the winner will be decided based on the team scoring the most tries, or if that fails to produce a winner, the team scoring the most goals from tries. If this fails to produce a winner then the winner of the match will be determined by a Place Kicking Competition, the procedure and conduct of which is set out in Appendix 1

(D) Eligibility of Players & Teams

1. All players must be a minimum of 18 years of age unless otherwise permitted to play adult rugby in accordance with RFU Regulation 15.
2. Subject to this Regulation D a player may only play in the Women’s County Championship Competitions for a County in which:
 - (i) she was born; or
 - (ii) she has completed not less than 6 months Residence within the County concerned in the preceding 12 months; or
 - (iii) she has played for a County in a previous Women’s County Championship Competition and who was qualified to play for that County under the Regulations then in effect. Any such player shall remain eligible to play for that County until such time as she qualifies for and plays for another County in any of the Competitions; or
 - (iv) she is an Effectively Registered Player of a Club allocated to the County on the date of the match.
3. No player or named replacement attending on the day of a match may represent more than one County in a Season.
4. If a player is eligible for more than one County in a season, the player may select which county to represent but once opted for a county for a particular season and selected in one match day squad in the competition for that county, the player cannot change to play for another county in the same season.
5. No county shall pay and no player shall receive, in each case whether directly or indirectly, any monetary benefit for participating in the Competition.
6. The following players are not eligible to play in any Division of the Competition:
 - (i) A player who has been part of an international senior squad, in the past two seasons, for a Union who qualified for the 2017 Women’s Rugby World Cup.
 - (ii) A player who has been part of one of the following core international sevens squads in the 2017-18 and/or 2018-19 Sevens World Series. Australia, Canada, China, England, Fiji, France, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, Russia, Spain, USA.

Note: Players are eligible if selected for international Touch Rugby, Deaf Rugby or Rugby League squad.

7. A County may not play or select as a replacement or substitute in a match day squad more than six (6) players who have been selected in a match day squad for the first team of a Women’s Premier 15s club. There is no cap on the number of second team Women’s Premier 15s players provided those players have only been selected for

the second team Women's Premier 15s squad. In addition, there is no cap on selecting Loan Players who have been registered with a Women's Premier 15s club during Season 2018-19.

8. ***Sanction: If a player is ruled ineligible after she has been selected in a pool match day squad, the County will be deducted 2 competition points in addition to any other competition points earned during the match. In other matches the Committee will determine what sanction will apply.***

(E) Replacements, Substitutions and Front Row requirements

1. The number of replacements and substitutes shall not be more than seven, with five players in the match squad being able to play front row to ensure that:
 - on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums; and
 - on the first occasion that a replacement prop is required the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.
2. Rolling substitutions are permitted in the Competition and the specific regulations relating to replacements and substitutions in relation to cup competitions are set out in Appendix 2 of RFU Regulation 13, including the relevant provisions around rolling substitutions, uncontested scrums and front row. For the purposes of this competition, Appendix 2 of Regulation 13 shall be applicable to the women's competition to the extent that the regulations apply to Cup competitions.

(F) Grounds

1. Except in the Finals the home County is responsible for correctly and clearly marking its pitch, and must make proper provision to ensure that (with the exception of the touch judges, the fourth official, the medical staff and water carriers who shall be limited to two in addition to the medical staff) all spectators, replacements coaching staff and officials are kept behind a permanent or semi-permanent pitch perimeter barrier at a reasonable distance from the field of play and make provision for two areas one for each team) each not exceeding 10 square metres (each of which when occupied will not in any way impede a touch judge undertaking his responsibilities) to be clearly designated between the touchline and any perimeter or pitch side fencing or other barrier as being that to which medical staff and water carriers when not attending to their duties as permitted by the referee are to be restricted during the match.
2. Participating Counties in a match must ensure that team replacements and coaches are behind any perimeter or pitch side fencing or other barriers during all periods of playing the match.
3. A decision as to the fitness of the ground for playing a match must be made as early as realistically possible having regard to the travel and other commitments of the visiting County. If a County wishes to postpone a match because of ground conditions on the day before the match is scheduled to be played the RFU Rugby Growth Department must be contacted to discuss options.

(G) Un-played/Abandoned Matches

1. If conditions prevent any match (except the Final) being played or a match is abandoned because of such conditions before full time, the Referee shall indicate on the Match Result Sheet the score at the time and reason for abandonment and the number of minutes played. The Committee shall determine whether the match is to be played or replayed or whether any score shall decide the result and its decision shall be final and binding. Each county must submit in writing to the RFU Rugby Growth Department within 48 hours of the end of the match, any representations they wish the Committee are to consider in making its decision.
2. If conditions prevent the Final of the Competitions being played the RFU Rugby Growth Department shall determine whether or not the same shall be played and if so upon what date and at which venue and such decision shall be final and binding.
3. The referee's decision as to the necessity for abandonment and the number of minutes played at the moment of abandonment shall be final.

(H) Kits

1. In the event of Counties having clashing or similar colours; the away team shall be responsible for changing its colours subject to the satisfaction of the appointed Referee or their nominee.

(I) Notification of Match Results

1. In all matches both teams shall complete and sign the Match Result Sheet provided by the RFU. The home team shall send the completed form to the RFU (or as it directs) within 90 minutes of the final whistle. Additionally, (if so directed by the RFU) the home team shall telephone the result to whomsoever the RFU specifies as soon as reasonably practical after the whistle.

(J) Finance

1. Payments to Counties will be made before the competition begins. The amounts and process for making the payments will be communicated to Counties by the Rugby Growth Department as soon as practicable.

(K) Jurisdiction and Breaches of Regulations

1. These Regulations are supplemental to the RFU Regulations which, for the avoidance of doubt, shall have full force and effect save that in the event of conflict between these Regulations and the RFU Regulations, the RFU Regulations (to the extent that they affect the Clubs) are deemed varied by these Regulations.
2. In respect of any matters alleged to be in breach of these Regulations and/or RFU Regulations, such matters shall be referred immediately to the Committee c/o the RFU Rugby Growth Department in writing or by telephone if necessary, within 24 hours following the conclusion of a match. In any event written confirmation must be sent to the RFU Rugby Growth Department within 48 hours of the conclusion of the match setting out the grounds of the complaint/breach in full.
3. Subject to a right of appeal in accordance with Regulation K(4) below, the Committee shall have the power to discipline and sanction any party for breach of any of these Regulations and/or any RFU Regulations. Ignorance of these Regulations will not be deemed an excuse in the event of any breach.
4. Should that party wish to appeal a decision of the Committee, that party shall have a right to appeal in accordance with RFU Regulation 19.

(L) Discipline

1. When a player is sent off or cited in any match in this competition, the disciplinary regulations and procedures set out in RFU Regulation 19 will apply.

APPENDIX 1

Place Kicking Competition

- 1 All players and match officials will remain on the playing area. The Referee will call the captains of the two teams to the centre circle and will conduct two coin tosses. The first toss of the coin will decide which team selects the end at which all place-kicks must be taken; the second toss of the coin will decide which team selects whether it wishes to kick first or second. For the avoidance of doubt, it may be that the same team wins both tosses in which case it may select the end at which all place kicks must be taken and whether it wishes to kick first or second in sequence.
- 2 Each team must nominate three players to take part in the competition. Only players on the playing area at the final whistle may be nominated. No substituted players or players who have been shown a red card may take part at any time. For clarification purposes, any player who has received a yellow card and who remains in the sin bin at the time of the final whistle may not take part in the place kick competition. The order in which the nominated players will kick does not have to be predetermined.
- 3 The match officials and the six nominated players (three from each team) will assemble on the halfway line. Team management and players not nominated must remain behind the halfway line in the side of the playing area not used. No one other than the match officials and the participating players is allowed in the part of the playing area being used for the competition (including around the playing area, behind the posts, etc).
- 4 The Referee starts the competition by calling the first player selected from the team kicking first to the first kicking point. Once the player has taken the kick, the Referee calls a player from the opposing team to kick from exactly the same spot.
- 5 Each kicker will take 2 kicks in the following order:-
 - Kicker 1 from team A and Kicker 1 from team B will each take a kick from position 1.
 - Kicker 2 from team A and Kicker 2 from team B will each take a kick from position 2.
 - Kicker 3 from team A and Kicker 3 from team B will each take a kick from position 3.
 - Kicker 1 from team A and Kicker 1 from team B will each take a kick from position 4.
 - Kicker 2 from team A and Kicker 2 from team B will each take a kick from position 5.
 - Kicker 3 from team A and Kicker 3 from team B will each take a kick from position 6.
6. If the teams are level at the end of the 6 kick competition there will be a 'sudden death competition'. All kicks will take place from position 4 and kicks will be taken in the following order:-
 - First to kick will be Kicker 1 from each team
 - Second to kick will be Kicker 2 from each team
 - Third to kick will be Kicker 3 from each team
 - Kicks will continue in this order until a point is reached where each team has taken the same number of sudden death kicks but one team has scored one more than the other team. When this point is reached the team that has scored more successful kicks will be declared the winner.
7. For the avoidance of doubt the Referee is the sole judge of whether a kick has been successful. In reaching this decision the Referee may rely on assistance from his Assistant Referees. The Referee's decision shall be final and binding.
8. Throughout the place kick competition:
 - (a) Once a player has positioned the ball on the kicking tee, he must take the kick within one minute. Should he take longer, the Referee shall declare the kick void.
 - (b) After each kick, the referee records the number of the player and whether or not the attempt was successful.

