

Danske Bank Ulster Schools Cup and related Competitions

Rules and Regulations 2017-2018

GENERAL REGULATIONS

1. In these Rules and Regulations : -
 - “Branch” means the Ulster Branch of the Irish Rugby Football Union ;
 - “Branch Committee” means the Committee of the Branch as provided for in the Byelaws ;
 - “Byelaws” means the Byelaws and Regulations of the Branch ;
 - “Laws of the Game” means the Laws of the Game as laid down by World Rugby, formerly known as the International Rugby Board ;
 - “Schools Committee” means the Schools Committee set up under the Byelaws to manage the affairs of schools rugby football;
 - “Schools Committee Officers” means the Chairman and Secretary of the Schools Committee, and the Schools Committee representative to the Branch Committee.
2. The Schools Committee Officers shall perform the functions assigned to them under the provisions of these Rules and Regulations.
3. Please note that the regulations governing these competitions are published in the Bye-laws of the Ulster Branch and the IRB Laws of the Game of Rugby Football. Your attention is drawn to the variations applicable to Under 19 Rugby. All schools in entering the Competitions, and signing the Entry Form, must agree to conform to all the Rules and Regulations described herein. Failure to meet any of the Rules and Regulations, in particular Regulation 45 may result in sanctions up to and including possible non admittance to competitions in the following year.
4. All participating schools are requested to adhere to the Code of Conduct as set out in the IRFU Child Welfare Document. (Copies are available from the Ulster Branch or can be accessed through the Ulster Branch website.)
5. Regulation 45 provides an overview of operational arrangements to be followed by schools involved in games at Kingspan Stadium. These will be forwarded by the Ulster Branch (IRFU) to Schools involved in games at the Kingspan Stadium in due course and participating schools are required to comply.
6. The Schools Committee, at its regular monthly meeting shall be the final arbiter of any decision of the Schools Committee Officers which is disputed by a School, provided that where reference to a monthly meeting of the Schools Committee is impractical a School may appeal direct to the Branch Committee in writing on School note paper signed by the Principal of the School, and addressed to the Honorary Secretary of the Branch. Any such appeal must be lodged within 96 hours of the school receiving official notification of the decision, and must be accompanied by a sum of £250 which may, at the discretion of the Branch Committee, be refunded in whole or in part.
7. The IRFU (Ulster Branch) / Ulster Rugby and its partners, will from time to time capture images (photographs and video footage) of pupils who are participating in the Schools Cup and associated competitions. These images will be used for promotional purposes in relation to the Schools Cup in a variety of media including websites and or the press. Pupils, Parents and Schools are normally very happy with such coverage but there may some individual circumstances which means that parents do not wish such images of their child to be in the public domain. It would be time consuming and impractical to seek school and parental permission on every occasion that an image of a pupil is to be used for the above purposes. It is therefore assumed that permission to use images of individuals participating in the Schools Cup has been granted unless otherwise notified by the school. If a school

wishes to update this notification at any stage throughout the season it can do so by contacting the Branch IRFU (Ulster Branch)/Ulster Rugby.

TOURNAMENT & FORMAT

8. Under the current format there are four competitions at 1st XV and Medallion XV Level, two at 2nd XV Level and two at 3rd XV Level. Entry to 2nd XV competitions requires entry to the Schools Cup and entry to the 3rd XV competitions requires entry to the 2nd XV competition other than in exceptional cases where High Schools, who do not compete in the Schools Cup, may be granted entry to the 2nd XV and 3rd XV competitions by the Schools Committee if this entry level is deemed to be more appropriate. (Players involved in U18/U19 Age Grade Squads will not be permitted to play in the 3rd XV competition.) Teamsheets will be monitored in order to ensure the integrity of all Senior competitions. In the event of significant duplication in starting XV's across the competitions, this will be investigated by the Schools Committee Officers and action taken, if appropriate. If schools have queries in respect of the eligibility of any of their players for a fixture in the 2nd and 3rd XV competitions they should seek clarification from the Schools Committee Officers in advance of the fixture being played.
9. Schools may claim for travel to one away match during either the Schools Cup **or** the Medallion Shield Cup competitions. A claim form should be requested from Lesley.mcgaughey@ulsterrugby.com
10. All matches at U18 level shall be 35 minutes each way, and at U15 level 30 minutes each way. Time may be added for injuries. There will be no extra time played.
11. In the event of the referee determining there is a 'clash' of jersey colours, the home team must agree to an alternative strip.
12. A fresh draw will be made after each round.
13. Only the semi finals of the Schools Cup and Medallion Shield Competitions will be played at neutral venues. All other semi finals will be played at the venue of the first named school, unless mutually agreed.
14. In the event that two competing schools are in mutual agreement to play their match prior to the date originally arranged, application should be made to the Schools Committee Officers for approval. Approval will not be given for matches to be played after the arranged date, other than in very exceptional circumstances agreed with the Schools Committee Officers (Chairman, Secretary and Branch Representative). For the avoidance of doubt, very exceptional circumstances must be unforeseen and not related to any planned school activities.
15. Where replays are necessary following a scheduled Saturday match or where games have been postponed, they must be played on/before the following Wednesday unless by agreement through the Schools Committee Officers. A further replay will be played at one of the school pitches with the venue being decided by a toss of a coin.
16. In the event of a further draw the winners will be decided as follows:
 - i. The team which scores the most tries in the final game.
 - ii. If still level, then the team who scored the most penalties in the final game.
 - iii. If still level, then the team who scored the most drop goals in the final game.
 - iv. If still level, then the team who scored the first try in the final match.
 - v. If still level, then the team who kicked the first penalty goal in the final match.
 - vi. If still level, then the team who scored the first drop goal in the final match.
 - vii. If still level the team who scores the most tries in the 3 games.
 - viii. If the above fail to differentiate then the toss of a coin by the referee will decide who progresses to the next round. The home side in the first game will be 'heads' and will progress if 'heads' is face up.

In the event of a drawn replay, in a competition other than the Schools Cup or Medallion Shield, and where there is insufficient time for a further replay, the toss of a coin (by the masters-in-charge) should be used.

17. At the semi final stage of the Schools Cup, in the event of the first match ending in a draw, there will only be one replay. If the semi final replay ends in a draw then the winners will be determined as per the provisions of Regulation 16 above . Note that in conjunction with the Branch, the Schools Committee will agree in advance the date and venue for the semi final replay.
18. In the event that a fixture is postponed on a second occasion, the Schools Committee Officers may seek to secure an alternative venue to stage the fixture.

RELATIONSHIP with COMPETITION SPONSORS – DANSKE BANK

19. Sponsor's branding to be located on either one sleeve of the playing jersey or playing shorts of all schools taking part in the Schools Cup competitions:
 - i. Ulster Rugby will facilitate the distribution of sleeve patches to all schools
 - ii. Digital artwork of the sponsor's branding will be available on request from Ulster Rugby if schools would prefer to have the branding sublimated into their jersey. If sublimated, the sponsor's branding must be located on one sleeve of the playing jersey.
20. In respect to the Schools Cup, the sponsor is permitted to brand two host venues for each round (up to and including quarter finals). Any school, upon request, will only be obliged to facilitate branding once in each year of the competition. Each host venue will be given one week's notice prior to the scheduled fixture date. Host venues may be asked to facilitate sponsor's branding more than once, however both parties must be in agreement. Branding can include some or all of the following:
 - i. Post pad protectors
 - ii. Perimeter A Frame and "toblerone" branding
 - iii. A gazebo near to the pitch to distribute promotional material
 - iv. PR staff to distribute promotional material
21. The sponsor's branding team will liaise with schools to determine a time that is suitable for both parties to erect any branding that has been agreed prior to the fixture.
22. All branding costs associated with venue branding are to be borne by the sponsor.
23. All schools are required to make the captain of the 1st XV Senior boys team or appointed representative available for PR at Kingspan Stadium or other nominated venue to launch the Schools Cup competition.
24. All teams involved in the Schools Cup final are required to make the Director of Rugby / Head Coach and Captain available for media and PR duties prior to the Final.
25. Additional PR & Media access to be accommodated where possible for Ulster Rugby, Danske Bank and the BBC.
26. If the game is being televised (you will be advised), access must be provided for the camera crews.

PLAYING SQUADS

27. The age limit for the senior competitions is Under 18 on the 1st July 2017 and Under 15 on the same date for the Medallion competitions.
28. All players must be registered appropriately on the Branch Player Registration System.
29. All pupils representing a school must be registered pupils of that school.
30. Before the start of the match both teams should supply a team list for the referee/press with players numbered and 8 replacements identified. This may be done through a match programme. An e team sheet must also be submitted to the Branch in respect of each fixture in all competitions.
31. Each team must have eight, and only eight, toggled out replacements, all of whom may play. A minimum of three Front Row Players must be included in each Match squad as replacements numbered 16 - 18, such that (a) on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required, (b) on the first occasion that a replacement tight-head prop forward is required, and (c) on the first occasion that a replacement loose-head prop forward is required (in each case whether due to injury or a Player being Temporarily Suspended or sent off), a replacement can be made and the School's team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.

MEDICAL

32. The decision of the extent or seriousness of a player's injury, including concussion, should be taken by the Team Coach or a Medical Officer, if present. However, Schools should be reminded of Law 3.10 which states *"If the referee decides – with or without the advice of a doctor or other medically qualified person – that a player is so injured that the player should stop playing, the referee may order that player to leave the playing area. The referee may also order an injured player to leave the field in order to be medically examined."*
33. All schools must comply with the IRFU protocols in relation to the management of concussion.
 - It should be noted that there is no Head Injury Assessment (HIA), pitch side concussion assessment (PSCA) or concussion bin in the amateur game in Ireland.
 - Players with suspected concussion cannot be temporarily replaced by a substitute and may not return to the playing area.
 - Any player with suspected or confirmed concussion, MUST be removed immediately from training/play and not return. They should be medically assessed and MUST not be left alone or MUST not drive a vehicle. They are required to follow the IRFU Graduated Return to Play protocol, which is a minimum of 23 days for U20-U6 players. All concussions must be reported on the IRFU Serious Injury and Concussion Report form and sent to the Branch office.

DISCIPLINARY

34. Referees for all 1st XV competitions will be appointed by the USRFR and, when possible, for other competitions. The Branch Office should be informed of the venue and time of kick-off for each game as soon as possible. The home school should make contact with the referee to confirm arrangements
35. Each school shall appoint a Touch Judge who must be an adult, preferably a teacher at the school. Neutral touch judges and/or fourth officials may be appointed at the discretion of the Schools Committee Officers.
36. In the event of a player being dismissed the Branch MUST be informed as soon as possible via the Principal's Representative, Stephen Black, Ballymena Academy. (028 2565 2782 or 07808401543). Normal Schools' protocol, as detailed below, will apply:
 - i. the dismissal should be reported to the Principals' Representative within two days of the game taking place. Following such a dismissal the player will be unable to play until the appropriate sanction has been agreed as per (ii) and (iii) below.
 - ii. Principals of the schools participating in the fixture should discuss the incident, following consultation with their respective Master i/c Rugby as appropriate, and seek to reach agreement on a suitable sanction, using Age Grade Specific Sanction Recommendations, for the player. If such agreement is reached, the proposed sanction shall be reported to the Principals' Representative who will then consider if the sanction appears to be appropriate. If so no further action will need to be taken and the sanction, as agreed, will apply.
 - iii. In the event that there is no agreement reached between the Principals or in the event that the Principals' Representative, in consultation with Schools Committee Officers, deems that the sanction is inappropriate, a Disciplinary Meeting will take place in the School as defined in the IRFU Framework Document and subsequent protocols within the Framework will be followed.
 - iv. In the event that a red card is contested then this will automatically follow the IRFU Framework and a Disciplinary Panel will be convened to address this as shown.
 - v. In the event that serious foul play has been alleged to have taken place, and where no red card has been issued, such an allegation should be reported within 48 hours of the alleged incident to the Principals' Representative. If the allegation is supported by a letter signed by the School Principal and the Master i/c Rugby then the alleged incident will be addressed using the protocols above and a sanction implemented as appropriate.
37. The 'sin bin' or 'yellow card' is operative in Ulster Schools' Rugby for U18 and Medallion Shield competitions (7 mins for U18 and 5 mins for U15).
38. Schools are asked to ensure that teams and pupil supporters are fully supervised by staff at all times especially when visiting other schools and neutral venues.

ORGANISATIONAL GUIDELINES

39. The visiting Team should advise their hosts of the number of buses expected i.e. team and supporters buses. The hosts should arrange parking for the buses and, if necessary, notify the local police. Health and safety is paramount. Hosts should also designate an official to meet and greet visiting schools.
40. Both schools should ensure that all pupil supporters are supervised by Staff at all times for fixtures played at school venues. In respect of fixtures at Kingspan Stadium, please refer to regulation 45.
41. A rope to keep spectators away from the touchline should be set up on both sides of the pitch and, if necessary the ends, for all four 1st XV competitions and any high profile Medallion Shield games.
42. Spectators should respect the opposition and behave accordingly especially during kicks at goal. Verbal abuse should not be directed at opposition players, coaches or spectators and supervising staff should take action to deal with any examples of this behaviour.
43. Technical areas should be marked out for coaching teams and replacements. These should be nine metres long and 3 metres wide and not less than 2 metres from the touchline. In the absence of such areas replacements must remain behind the roped off area. All coaches must remain inside the designated Technical Zone for the duration of the game. The only exception is when a coach may have to go onto the field of play to attend to an injured player. Other than replacement players, a maximum of four persons should be within the technical zone.
44. All replacements should have bibs of a neutral colour (not track suit tops). Replacements may only warm up between the 15 metre lines in the in goal area that their team is attacking and must not stay static.
45. In respect of fixtures played at Kingspan Stadium the following will apply;
 - Tickets will only be sold to schools on the basis that pupils will be bused to the ground from pre-selected locations i.e. either from the school or another location. Such pupils must be fully supervised at all times;
 - An appropriate number of staff must be provided by schools, the numbers and stadium location to be agreed and approved in advance by the Branch, to steward pupils and supporters;
 - There will now be a policy of no pitch invasion by any supporters whatsoever.
 - The Branch and School Stewards should seek to deter any pitch invasion. Should this happen, every effort should be made by both the School and the Branch to identify those responsible and ensure that they are appropriately dealt with. At the end of the game, the successful School could bring the cup to their supporters around the ground;
 - A “cordon sanitaire” will be established around the Players’ Tunnel, with no supporters allowed in that area;
 - Only four persons from each school will be permitted within the enclosed pitch area and must remain within the designated technical zone except when attending to injuries.
 - Each team’s 8 replacement players must occupy the seats in the dugout directly behind the allocated technical zone.
 - The Committee Box and main Grandstand will continue to be used, as before, for Boards of Governors, senior staff, senior Branch members.
 - The Event Manager will, in advance of each game, check to ensure full communication between all partners responsible for managing and stewarding the game;
 - Before each game at the Stadium, every school must commit to read out an agreed script at School Assembly, reminding pupils of the requirements above, and warning that any breach e.g. invasion of the pitch, will result in serious sanctions;
Branch staff must ensure that any breaches of pre-match protocols are immediately brought to the attention of the offending team’s head coach and that the team conforms to the protocols. The Schools Committee will be notified accordingly.

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We acknowledge receipt of the Rules and Regulations 2017-2018 and our commitment to honour the terms and conditions of the Rules and Regulations.

Name of School:

Signatures:

School Principal

1st XV Coach/Master i/c Rugby

Please return this acknowledgement by Monday 23rd October 2017 to:-

Richard Clingan (rclingan816@rsd.dungannon.ni.sch.uk),
Honorary Secretary, Ulster Schools' Committee, Ulster Branch (IRFU),
c/o The Royal School Dungannon,
2 Ranfurly Road,
Dungannon,
Co Tyrone,
BT71 6EG.