



National Competition Rules

Season 2026/27

These National Competition Rules shall apply in respect of the following competitions as designated by the Club Rugby Board:

(Women's) Sarah Beaney Cup

(Women's) National Shield

(Women's) National Plate

(Women's) National Bowl



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Scottish Rugby National Competition Rules

DEFINITIONS

Board'	means the Scottish Rugby Club Rugby Board, or any sub-committee of the Board operating under the specific authority of the Board.
'Best Playing Record Calculation ("BPRC")'	means average Competition Points gained in completed Matches multiplied by total Matches possible (e.g. a Club plays in 15 of its 22 possible Matches, achieving 34 Competition Points: BPRC adjusted points = $34/15 \times 22 = 49.86$).
'Central Programme'	means the Scottish Rugby High Performance programme
'Championship Committee'	means the Scottish Rugby Championship Committee.
'Championship Secretary'	means the person who deals with the day-to-day running of the Scottish Rugby Competitions.
'Club'	means any club, team or other body (as the context may require) which participates in a Scottish Rugby Competition.
'Club Investment Fund Standards' ("CIF")	means the minimum standards and requirements issued by Scottish Rugby from time to time.
'Competitions'	means the Scottish Rugby Women's league and knock-out competitions designated by the Board from time to time.
'Competitions Committee'	means a committee elected or appointed to assist in the organisation of an individual Scottish Rugby Women's Competitions.
'Competitions Secretary'	means the person appointed by Scottish Rugby to act as Secretary to a Scottish Rugby Competitions Committee.
'Contracted Players'	means players contracted to Scottish Rugby as part of the Central or National Academy programmes.
'Cup'	means such Women's competitions as are designated as Scottish Rugby Competitions by the Board and as the context may require.
'Emergency Loan Player'	means a player permitted to participate for a club by virtue of Rules 5.25-5.26
'Game On'	means the Law Variations approved for use in certain Scottish Rugby Competitions, as further detailed on the Scottish Rugby website.
'International Clearance'	means the formal process under World Rugby Regulation 4 and Scottish Domestic Regulation 4.2 (Clearance to Play in another Union) whereby a Player is granted permission by both Unions to change the Union within which they are registered to play.
'Laws of the Game'	means the Laws of the Game as issued by World Rugby from time to time and a reference to a "Law" shall be to that Law as worded within the Laws of the Game.
'Match'	means a match played or to be played in a Competition.
'National Academy'	means the Scottish Rugby High Performance National Academy
'Player'	means any person who is named by a Club to participate in a Match.
'Playing Enclosure'	means the Field of Play and the Perimeter Area as set out in Law 1.
'Primary League Club'	means the Club which currently holds the Player's registration and is responsible for maintaining all aspects of the Player's registration details.
'Regulations'	means any supplementary regulations provided or approved by the Board in respect of individual Competitions, or generally.

'Rules'	means the Scottish Rugby Competition Rules approved by the Club Rugby Board from time to time.
'Scottish Rugby'	means Scottish Rugby Union.
'Secondary League Club'	means the one additional Club for which a Player is formally registered to play.
'Transfer Deadline'	means the deadline date after which player transfers within specified competitions are no longer permitted.
'World Rugby'	means the game's world governing body

ORGANISATION AND APPLICATION

The Competition Rules

- 2.1 The Competitions are governed by these Rules, which, together with any amendments or supplementary Regulations, require approval from the Club Rugby Board. The Club Rugby Board may issue additional Regulations for individual Competitions, amend the Rules and Regulations, and correct any error or omission as it considers appropriate.
- 2.2 Unless the context requires otherwise, words importing one gender include all genders, and words in the singular include the plural. If any provision is held to be illegal, void or unenforceable (in whole or in part), the remaining provisions will continue in force.

Women's Competitions Committee

- 2.3 The Club Rugby Board and the Championship Committee is supported in organising the Competitions by the Women's Competitions Committee comprising:
 - 2.3.1 a Convenor (appointed by the Board);
 - 2.3.2 one representative elected from the Clubs participating in the Premiership;
 - 2.3.3 one representative elected from the Clubs participating in National League ~~Division 1~~;
 - 2.3.4 two representatives elected from the Clubs participating in each of the Caledonia North, Caledonia Midlands/East and West Regional Leagues; and
 - 2.3.5 such other individuals as may be co-opted to the Committee (in a non-voting capacity).
 - 2.3.6 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a Competitions Secretary to assist in the administration of the Championship.
- 2.4 Subject to the Appeals Process, the Competitions Committee may decide all matters relating to the organisation, control, and management of the Competition (including eligibility and qualification). Its decisions are final and binding on all participants.
- 2.5 Where a matter is routine or urgent and a meeting cannot reasonably be arranged, the Convenor/Chair may, subject to any direction from the Championship Committee, exercise that Committee's powers under these Rules and Regulations.

Compliance

- 2.6 By entering a Competition, a Club agrees to comply with these Rules and Regulations, their spirit, and any other applicable Scottish Rugby rules, policies or procedures.
- 2.7 Clubs shall ensure that their Players and officials comply with all applicable Rules and Regulations.
- 2.8 Clubs must comply with Scottish Rugby Club Investment Fund Standards unless granted a dispensation. Scottish Rugby may suspend any Club which fails to meet or to maintain these Standards.
- 2.9 Unless otherwise stated in Scottish Rugby rules or policies, World Rugby's Laws of the Game of Rugby Football (the "Laws") and the World Rugby Regulations Relating to the Game shall apply.

COMPOSITION AND FORMAT OF THE CUP COMPETITIONS

Sarah Beane Cup

- 3.1 The Sarah Beane Cup shall be contested by Teams competing in the Premiership and National League. The detailed format of the competition shall be published by the Championship Secretary prior to the start of the competition.

National Shield

- 3.2 The National Shield shall be contested by Teams competing in Regional League Divisions 1. The detailed format of the competition shall be published by the Championship Secretary prior to the start of the competition.

National Plate

- 3.3 The National Plate shall be contested by Teams competing in Regional League Divisions 2 and 3. The detailed format of the competition shall be published by the Championship Secretary prior to the start of the competition.

National Bowl

- 3.4 The National Bowl shall be contested by teams regularly participating in the Aspiring League programme. The detailed format of the competition shall be published by the Championship Secretary prior to the start of the competition.

- 3.5 In the event that more than one team from the same club is eligible to play in the same Cup Competition, the 2nd XV will automatically be entered in the next Cup Competition and replaced by the next qualifying team.
- 3.6 The Competitions Committee reserve the right to modify the competition format where necessary, including at short notice.

FIXTURES

Date and Kick-Off Time

- 4.1 The date, time and home/away status are set by the relevant Competitions Secretary. Each Match, except for the national finals, shall be played at the home ground of the Club drawn first. The venues for the national finals shall be determined by the Board. The home Club in a final shall be determined by the order of the semi-final draw, with the finalist drawn first being the home Club.
- 4.2 Matches must be played as scheduled. By agreement of both Clubs, the home Club may apply in writing to the Competitions Secretary to change the date or time (including evenings and weekdays). Applications must be submitted at least 7 days before kick-off time and include evidence of both Clubs consent. Approval will only be granted where the change does not adversely affect the completion of the league or competition schedule.
- 4.3 On days of senior Scotland international matches, fixtures should normally kick off no later than 2 hours before the international. Alternative times may be agreed by both Clubs, with notice and evidence of consent provided at least 7 days in advance to the Competitions Secretary.
- 4.4 The Championship Committee or relevant Competitions Committee may reschedule any Match, including at short notice. Rescheduling one Match may require changes to others.
- 4.5 Matches are normally played at the home Club's usual venue. Any change of venue must be promptly notified to the Competitions Secretary, the visiting Club, and the referee.
- 4.6 Scottish Rugby owns all rights in fixtures, results, and related data, and has exclusive authority to grant access for recording, broadcasting, or transmitting matches in any media. Clubs must comply with all agreements relating to these rights (including broadcast and commercial arrangements). Where required:
 - 4.6.1 Matches may be rescheduled or moved to an alternative venue;
 - 4.6.2 Clubs must cooperate fully with such changes; and
 - 4.6.3 No compensation is payable for rescheduling due to broadcasting requirementsScottish Rugby may issue additional rules to implement these arrangements, including requirements for broadcasting, advertising, and matchday content. Clubs must comply with all such rules.

Postponed and Abandoned Matches

- 4.7 Where a Cup Match is postponed or abandoned before 20 minutes of the second half have elapsed, it shall be replayed as directed by the Competitions Secretary. Rescheduled Cup Matches shall normally be played on the next available date free of Competition fixtures and shall take priority over rescheduled League Matches. Where necessary, the ~~relevant~~ Competitions Committee may require a Match to be played midweek. Other fixtures may be rearranged to accommodate the rescheduled Match. A Club failing to comply with any direction may be subject to disqualification and/or other sanctions.
- 4.8 Where a Match is abandoned after at least 20 minutes of the second half have been completed, the Match shall be deemed complete and the score at the time of abandonment shall stand.
- 4.9 The ~~relevant~~ Competitions Committee may investigate the circumstances of any abandoned Match and take such action as it considers appropriate.
- 4.10 For the avoidance of doubt, all disciplinary procedures, including those relating to red cards, yellow cards, citing, and misconduct, shall apply to an abandoned Match as if it had been completed.
- 4.11 Where a Match is likely to be postponed, the home Club must make reasonable efforts to secure an alternative venue. In the event of a postponement, the home Club must promptly notify the opposition Club, the Match referee, and the Competitions Secretary. Failure to make reasonable efforts may result in sanctions, including a formal warning and/or deduction of Competition Points.
- 4.12 A postponed Match shall normally be rescheduled to the next available date free of Competition fixtures, and no sooner than seven days after the original fixture date. Other Matches may be rearranged where necessary to accommodate the rescheduled fixture.
- 4.13 A Cup fixture may only be rescheduled once without the consent of the ~~relevant~~ Competitions Committee. Where a rescheduled Match cannot be played, or where required for the completion of the Competition:
 - 4.13.1 in league format/pool matches, two Competition Points shall be awarded to each Team; and
 - 4.13.2 in knock-out Matches, the outcome shall be determined by the toss of a coin.

Non-Fulfilment of Fixtures

4.14 A Club shall not, without just cause, fail to fulfil its fixture obligations. The relevant Competitions Committee shall be the sole judge as to whether just cause exists.

Sarah Beaney Cup Pool Fixtures

4.15 If a Club fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified it shall receive the following automatic penalty:

4.15.1 First default (in season): a three Competition Point deduction;

4.15.2 Second default: a four Competition Point deduction; and

4.15.3 Third default and subsequent defaults: a five Competition Point deduction.

4.16 If a Club fails to fulfil a fixture on the date notified and provides less than 48 hours' notice to their opponents, the Competitions Committee may consider further sanctions.

4.17 A Club penalised under **Rule 4.15.3** and/or **Rule 4.16**, or Scottish Rugby may request a review by the Competitions Committee only where the breach was due to exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond its control. Requests must be submitted within 7 days of the scheduled kick-off. The Committee may cancel, reduce, uphold, or increase the penalty.

4.18 Where the Competitions Committee determines that a default resulted from the wilful actions of a Club, it may, in addition to any other sanction:

4.18.1 impose sanctions on either or both Clubs, including a formal reprimand, a warning as to future conduct, a deduction of up to an additional five Competition Points, disqualification from the relevant competition, and/or the withholding of up to the full amount of any participation funding or prize money to which the Club may otherwise be entitled; and/or

4.18.2 award the Competition Points to either Club, apportion them between the Clubs as it considers appropriate, determine that no Competition Points shall be awarded, or order that the Match be replayed.

4.19 Where a Club is penalised under **Rule 4.15.3** and/or **Rule 4.16**, the Competitions Committee may also disqualify the Club if it considers this necessary or appropriate.

4.20 Where a fixture is not fulfilled and the opposition incurs unnecessary expense, the Competitions Committee may order the defaulting Club to reimburse the reasonable costs of the non-offending Club and Match Officials, subject to proof.

4.21 If a Club fails to fulfil three or more Competition fixtures in consecutive seasons the Competition Committee may suspend the Club from Competitions for such period as it considers appropriate.

National Shield, Plate and Bowl Pool Fixtures

4.22 Where a Club fails to fulfil a fixture in the league or pool stages of the National Shield, Plate or Bowl, the non-offending Club shall be awarded a 28–0 win and five Competition Points. The defaulting Club shall receive no points, and the Competitions Committee may consider whether to raise a Complaint in respect of the non-fulfilment.

Knock-Out Matches

4.23 Where a Club fails to fulfil a knock-out Match, it shall be liable to disqualification and/or other sanctions

4.24 Where the Competitions Committee determines that a default has resulted from the willful actions of a Club, it may:

4.24.1 impose sanctions on either or both Clubs, including a formal reprimand, a warning as to future conduct, a deduction of up to an additional five Competition Points, disqualification from the relevant Competition, and/or a financial penalty of up to the full amount of any participation money to which the Club may be entitled; and/or

4.24.2 award Competition Points to either Club, apportion them between the Clubs as it considers appropriate, determine that no Competition Points shall be awarded, and/or order that the Match be replayed.

4.25 Where any fixture is not fulfilled and the opposing Club incurs unnecessary expense, the Competitions Committee may require the defaulting Club to reimburse the reasonable costs of the non-offending Club and Match Officials, subject to proof of such costs.

Drawn Matches

4.26 Where the teams are level at full time in any knock-out match, extra time shall be played and the winner determined in accordance with the Knock Out Match Extra Time Rules (**11.3-11.4**)

THE PLAYERS

Registration, De-Registration & Eligibility

5.1 All Players must be registered on the Scottish Rugby system (SCRUMS). A Player is registered once allocated a

- unique reference number and listed as active for a Club. Registration alone does not confer eligibility; Players must meet all other requirements (including International Clearance). Scottish Rugby may refuse, suspend, or request further information on any application.
- 5.2 Players requiring International Clearance are not eligible to play until written confirmation of the completion of the International Clearance process is received from Scottish Rugby.
 - 5.3 A Player may be registered with one Primary League Club and one Secondary League Club. The Primary Club is normally where the Player trains and plays most. A Player may only play for a Club once listed as active on its register.
 - 5.4 Players must be aged 18 or over to play in adult competitions unless granted prior written dispensation.
 - 5.5 Players wishing to transfer must notify their current Club. The new Club must apply to transfer the registration in the prescribed manner.
 - 5.6 Clubs must keep Player registrations accurate and up to date, including activation status. Registrations must be deactivated:
 - 5.6.1 on a Player's request (with written confirmation to the Player);
 - 5.6.2 when a Player receives International Clearance to play outwith Scotland; or
 - 5.6.3 when any required visa, permit, or consent expires.
 - 5.7 A Player's registration may be suspended or cancelled (including retrospectively) for breaches of rules or procedures. Registration status at any time is determined by the official list of active Players on that date.
 - 5.8 It shall be a specific offence:
 - 5.8.1 to register a Player without their consent;
 - 5.8.2 to field an ineligible Player;
 - 5.8.3 breach Player payment provisions of SDR 4.1 Player Status and Player Contracts.
 - 5.8.4 mislead Scottish Rugby or any Competitions Committee registration or eligibility matters.
 - 5.9 If a Club fields an ineligible Player, or one not listed on the Team Sheet, the Competitions Committee may impose penalties on the Club and the Player.
 - 5.10 A Player cannot be first registered with a Secondary Club for the quarter final (or equivalent) rounds.

Dual Registration

- 5.11 Player's Primary and Secondary Clubs must be in different league divisions. Should a Player's Primary or Secondary League Club be promoted / relegated into the same division (e.g. through promotion or relegation), the Player must be deregistered from their Secondary Club.
- 5.12 A dual-registered Player may not play for the first team of their lower Club in its final four Matches in a national semi-final or final unless, at least 50% of their competition appearances (league and cup) this season have been for their lower club, or they have prior written permission from the Competitions Committee.
- 5.13 A dual-registered Player shall not be eligible to play for their lower-placed Club in the same weekend where they have played more than 40 minutes for their higher-placed Club.
- 5.14 A Player who has been selected for Scotland Women, or the senior national team of another Union, within the preceding 12 months shall not be eligible for dual registration unless dispensation is granted by the Competitions Committee.
- 5.15 The number of dual-registered Players permitted to be included in a matchday squad for their lower-placed Club shall be:
 - 5.15.1 Sarah Beaney Cup and National Shield: up to three
 - 5.15.2 National Plate and National Bowl: no restriction.
- 5.16 No Player may be named in matchday squads for Matches that are played concurrently or overlap.

Transfer Deadline

- 5.17 The Transfer Deadline date is **Monday 14 December 2026**.
- 5.18 A Player who receives International Clearance, is dual registered, or transfers after the relevant deadline may not play for their new Club in a Scottish Rugby competition for the rest of the season unless:
 - 5.18.1 the competition rules allow it;
 - 5.18.2 the Player turns 18 after the deadline; or
 - 5.18.3 the Player has written permission from the Championship Committee.
- 5.19 Permission will normally only be granted in exceptional circumstances (e.g. a non-rugby change of residence or other situation making it impractical for the Player to remain at their current Club).
- 5.20 The Transfer Deadline shall not apply to Teams participating in a Regional League's second or lower divisions. However, any Player registered under this exemption shall not be eligible to participate in a national semi-final or final of the Plate or Bowl without prior written approval from the Competitions Committee. The granting of any such approval shall be at the sole discretion of the Competitions Committee.

Central Programme Contracted and National Academy Players

5.21 Players contracted to the Central Programme and National Academy shall not be eligible to participate in Cup Competition Matches

Ineligible First XV Players

5.22 Where a Club has a second XV or lower team competing in a Competition, a Player who has started a first XV Match shall not be eligible to play for a lower XV in a Competition Match during the same season unless:

- 5.22.1 the Club's first and second XV Matches are concurrent;
- 5.22.2 fewer than 50% of the Player's appearances that season have been as a first XV starter; or
- 5.22.3 prior dispensation has been granted by the Competitions Committee.

5.23 First XV and second XV fixtures played over the same weekend shall be deemed to be concurrent Matches for the purposes of **Rule 5.22**.

5.24 A Player who has played fewer than 40 minutes for the first XV may play for the second XV in the same weekend, subject to the eligibility criteria set out in **Rule 5.22**

Emergency Loan Scheme

5.25 A Club that cannot fulfil a Match or meet the requirements of Law 3.8 due to a short-term shortage of suitably experienced front-row Players may borrow up to two front-row Players from other Clubs. Emergency Loan Players shall not become registered to their loan Club.

5.26 A Player may not play on loan:

- 5.26.1 for a Club in the same Cup Competition as their Primary Club; or
- 5.26.2 for a Club in a lower Cup Competition from the quarter finals or equivalent (or later); or
- 5.26.3 for a Club in more than three Matches per season or for more than two Clubs in a season; or
- 5.26.4 where their participation on loan risks compromising their Primary Club's ability to meet its own competition obligations Without prior approval of the Championship Committee.

THE TEAMS

Team Colours

6.1 Clubs must avoid clashes of team colours (jersey and/or socks), with the referee deciding if a clash exists. The home Club must change if required. Any Club intending to play in colours other than those recorded in SCRUMS must notify the opposition and the referee at least 72 hours before kick-off.

Team Sheets

6.2 Clubs must provide a completed team sheet to the referee and opposition at least 30 minutes before kick-off. Changes may be made up to kick-off. Only players named on the team sheet are eligible to play.

6.3 The team sheet must include each Players name, registration number and unique identifier (e.g. jersey number). It must also identify front-row Players (LH, H, TH), dual-registered Players, and any emergency loan Players.

6.4 Any alternative identification system (other than jersey numbers) must be approved by the Championship Committee or Competitions Committee at least 10 days before a fixture.

6.5 Team sheets must be submitted to Scottish Rugby within 48 hours of kick-off in accordance with its procedures.

6.6 It is an offence to fail to submit a team sheet or to submit one that is incomplete or inaccurate. The following automatic penalties apply.

- 6.6.1 First offence (in season): £25 of the Clubs 'CIF' payment;
- 6.6.2 Second offence: £50 of the Clubs 'CIF' payment;
- 6.6.3 Third and subsequent offences: £50 per instance. After five or more offences the Competition Secretary may raise a Complaint under **Rule 13.1**.

6.7 A Club may request a review of a penalty only where the failure was due to exceptional and unforeseen circumstances beyond its control. Requests must be within 14 days. The Competitions Committee may cancel, reduce, uphold, or increase the penalty.

Number of Starting Players

6.8 In the Sarah Beane Cup and National Shield, a Team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players, but not fewer than 12, provided it fields at least five Players in the scrum at all times. Should a Team be reduced (through injury or the dismissal of Players) to less than 12 Players then the Match shall be abandoned at that point.

6.9 In the National Plate Competition:

- 6.9.1 A Team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players, but not fewer than 10, provided that at least five Players are available for the scrum at all times. Where a Match starts with fewer than 15 Players, both Clubs must begin with an equal number of Players ("Player Matching").
 - 6.9.2 Player Matching shall be maintained throughout the Match, regardless of the number of Players, except where a Player is temporarily or permanently dismissed from the field.
 - 6.9.3 A Match may start with uncontested scrums, provided that at least five Players are available for the scrum at all times and the Team requesting uncontested scrums does not include any replacements in its matchday squad. The Team must notify the opposition and the referee as soon as reasonably practicable and, except in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team must also notify the relevant Competitions Secretary within 48 hours of the Match.
 - 6.9.4 If a Team is reduced to fewer than 10 Players during the Match, whether through injury or dismissal, the Match shall be abandoned.
- 6.10 In the National Bowl Competitions:
- 6.10.1 A Team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players, but not fewer than 10, provided that at least five Players are available for the scrum at all times. Where a Match starts with fewer than 15 Players, both Clubs must begin with an equal number of Players ("Player Matching").
 - 6.10.2 Player Matching shall be maintained throughout the Match, regardless of the number of Players, except where a Player is temporarily or permanently dismissed from the field.
 - 6.10.3 A Match may start with uncontested scrums, provided that at least five Players are available for the scrum at all times and the Team requesting uncontested scrums does not include any replacements in its matchday squad. The Team must notify the opposition and the referee as soon as reasonably practicable and, except in exceptional circumstances, no later than 30 minutes before kick-off. The Team must also notify the relevant Competitions Secretary within 48 hours of the Match.
 - 6.10.4 If a Team is reduced to fewer than 10 Players during the Match, whether through injury or dismissal, the Match shall be abandoned.
- 6.11 Any Match not complying with the above requirements shall be declared unfulfilled and may be investigated as a Non-Fulfilled Fixture ([Rule 4.22-4.25](#)).

Replacements / Substitutes

- 6.12 The number of replacements shall be: **Up to seven.**
- 6.13 There is no requirement for both teams to have the same number of replacements, but the front-row requirements in Law 3.8 must be met.
- 6.14 A maximum of 12 rolling substitutions may be used in a Match. The 15-minute limit on temporary Blood Replacements in Law 3 does not apply to rolling substitutions.
- 6.15 No Player may be included in squads for Matches which are being played either concurrently or are overlapping

Late Arrival

- 6.16 If Players are unavoidably delayed, a Club may ask the referee to delay kick-off to allow it to field a full team. Any delay must still allow the Match to be completed on time, as determined by the referee.

THE GROUND

The Pitch

- 7.1 The home Club must provide a suitable pitch that complies with Law 1 with dimensions as close as practicable to the maximum permitted and meeting any Scottish Rugby requirements. Goalpost padding must also comply with Law 1.7. If these requirements are not met, the referee may postpone the Match.

Fitness of Ground or Conditions for Play

- 7.2 If there is doubt about pitch fitness before Match day:
 - 7.2.1 the home Club must, where practicable, give at least 72 hours' notice to the visiting Club and referee, including any contingency plans;
 - 7.2.2 the visiting Club must provide a contact and its intended departure time;
 - 7.2.3 the home Club must arrange an independent pitch inspection (normally by the referee, or otherwise a suitably qualified independent person) and;
 - 7.2.4 the inspection must take place at least 60 minutes before the visiting Club's departure time, with the outcome communicated at least 30 minutes before the departure and to the referee.

- 7.3 If the home Club fails to arrange an inspection, the visiting Club may do so. If the pitch is deemed playable but the Match is postponed, the Competitions Committee may investigate.
- 7.4 If there is doubt about pitch fitness before kick-off the referee and both captains must inspect the pitch. If any one of them considers it unplayable, the Match will be postponed. The decision is final, and captains must inform their Clubs.
- 7.5 Within 48 hours of a postponed Match, the home Club must notify the Competitions Secretary of the reasons. Further information may be requested to determine whether a Complaint should be raised against either or both Clubs.
- 7.6 If a Club does not control its ground and it is declared unplayable by the rights holder, written evidence must be provided to the Competitions Secretary. Failure to do so may result in investigation by the Competitions Committee.

THE MATCH

Match Organisation

- 8.1 Unless otherwise directed by the Competitions Committee, the home Club is responsible for staging of the Match and all related logistics.
- 8.2 The home Club must ensure that the venue is suitable and compliant with all applicable laws, regulations, and local authority requirements, and is safe for Players, officials, and spectators. It must also maintain appropriate insurance cover for all liabilities arising from the Match.
- 8.3 The visiting Club must be informed of all relevant health and safety and associated requirements. Spectators must be kept at a safe distance and must not enter or interfere with the Player Enclosure, Match officials, or Players.

Gate receipts

- 8.4 For knock-out Matches, gate receipts (net of any VAT) will be shared equally between the Clubs. The visiting Club's share will be paid after deducting the home Club's agreed match expenses (including programmes/tickets, reasonable advertising, policing or emergency services, post-match catering, and any other agreed costs).
- 8.5 For knock-out Matches, free admission (including season tickets or membership) does not apply. All spectators must pay the same entry fee for equivalent access, where a charge is made.

Match Ball

- 8.6 The home Club will provide at least three match balls compliant with the Laws.

Half-Time Interval

- 8.7 The half-time interval is normally five minutes but may be varied by agreement between the Clubs, provided it does not exceed 15 minutes and the referee is notified before kick-off.
- 8.8 Teams may leave the Playing Enclosure and use covered accommodation during half-time.

Competition Points

- 8.9 In all League and Pool stage Matches, four points shall be awarded for a win and two points for a draw ("Match Points"). In addition, one bonus point shall be awarded to a Club scoring four or more tries, and one bonus point shall be awarded to a losing Club finishing within seven points or fewer of the winning Club ("Bonus Points").

Notification of Results

- 8.10 The home Club must report the Match result to the Competitions Secretary in accordance with Scottish Rugby procedures.

THE MATCH: LAW VARIATIONS

- 9.1 For Plate and Bowl Matches the Game On Law Variations may be applied (see [Scottish Rugby website](#)).
- 9.2 For Plate and Bowl Matches the U19 Scrummage Law Variations shall apply.

REFEREES AND TOUCH JUDGES

- 10.1 Scottish Rugby will appoint referees and assistant referees for each of the Finals matches.
- 10.2 In respect of earlier rounds:
 - 10.2.1 Scottish Rugby shall appoint a referee and, where available, assistant referees for all Sarah Beane Cup Matches.

- 10.2.2 The home Club's referee society shall appoint a referee for each Shield, Plate and Bowl Match. Assistant referees shall be appointed by the home Club's local society for National semi-finals. In all other Matches, each Team shall provide a touch judge.
- 10.3 The home Club shall be responsible for confirming the appointment of the referee and, where applicable, assistant referees.

METHOD FOR DECIDING QUALIFYING PLACINGS IN THE EVENT OF EQUALITY IN LEAGUE FORMAT COMPETITIONS

- 11.1 If two or more Teams are level on Competition Points, their rankings will be determined by the total Competition Points earned in the head-to-head Matches between those teams. If still unresolved, the aggregate points different from those head-to-head Matches will be used. If teams remain tied and ranking affect qualification, promotion, relegation, or the title:
- 11.1.1 a play-off Match will normally be arranged at a neutral venue; or
 - 11.1.2 if a play-off match cannot be played, the Competition Committee may apply the criteria in [Rule 11.3](#), first to head-to-head Matches and then to all Matches in the Competition. If still unresolved the outcome may be decided by a coin toss.
- 11.2 If [Rule Error! Reference source not found.](#) does not separate the Teams, the result of the Match between the tied Teams shall determine their placing. Where that Match was drawn, the away Team shall be ranked higher.

Play-Off and Knock-Out Matches

- 11.3 If a play-off or knock-out Match is level at full time, extra time will be played (two periods of 10 minutes, with a one-minute interval). The referee will toss a coin to decide the direction of play. If still level after extra time, the winner will be determined (include scores in extra time) by:
- 11.3.1 the team scoring more tries;
 - 11.3.2 the team scoring more conversions;
 - 11.3.3 the team scoring more drop goals;
 - 11.3.4 the team receiving fewer red cards; and
 - 11.3.5 the team receiving fewer yellow cards.
- 11.4 If still tied further extra time will be played on a sudden-death basis, with the first team to score declared the winner.

CLUBS DISQUALIFIED, SUSPENDED OR WITHDRAWING

- 12.1 Where a Club is disqualified, suspended, or withdraws from a league or pool after the start of the Competition, all results of Matches played by that Club shall be void and removed. League standings shall then be recalculated based on Matches played between the remaining Clubs.
- 12.2 Where the removal of a Club's results affects qualification for the next stage of the Competition, particularly where a Team has already completed its fixtures, the relevant Competitions Committee may make such arrangements as it considers appropriate to resolve the matter.

COMPLAINTS

- 13.1 A complaint of an alleged breach of the Rules or Regulations (a "Complaint") may be made by:
- 13.1.1 the Championship Secretary (for any Competition);
 - 13.1.2 a Competition Secretary (for their competitions only); or
 - 13.1.3 a Club where it is directly affected and has suffered significant disadvantage or material prejudice.
- 13.2 All Complaints must:
- 13.2.1 set out the alleged breach and relevant Rule/Regulation;
 - 13.2.2 explain the disadvantage or prejudice suffered; and
 - 13.2.3 be signed by the complainant (for Clubs, by the President, Secretary or in the absence of either of these another authorised Club Official).
- 13.3 Complaints must be submitted within 14 days of the alleged breach.
- 13.4 The subject of the Complaint will be provided with a copy as soon as practicable.

Complaint Process

- 13.5 Complaints will be determined by the Competitions Committee or a sub-committee of at least three members (the "Complaints Committee"), with any conflicts of interest declared and managed.
- 13.6 The Complaints Committee may:
- 13.6.1 determine its own procedures, including holding hearings in person or by electronic means;

- 13.6.2 decide timescales and expedite matters where necessary, and waive the 14-day limit where appropriate;
- 13.6.3 request and consider any relevant evidence;
- 13.6.4 request attendance of any Club, team, or person. Failure to cooperate may result in the matter proceeding in their absence and/or disciplinary action.
- 13.7 The subject of the Complaint has the right to:
 - 13.7.1 be represented (up to two representatives, one of whom must be a Club member if applicable);
 - 13.7.2 submit evidence, call witnesses and make representations; and
 - 13.7.3 receive written notice of the decision.
- 13.8 The burden of proof lies with the complainant and is on the balance of probabilities.
- 13.9 Written reasons will be provided if requested and upon any appeal.

Sanctions

- 13.10 If a Complaint is upheld, the Complaints Committee may impose one or more of the following:
 - 13.10.1 a formal reprimand and warning;
 - 13.10.2 a deduction of up to the full amount of any participation money which the Club may be entitled to;
 - 13.10.3 an award of costs;
 - 13.10.4 require any Match to be replayed;
 - 13.10.5 the deduction of up to five Competition Points per breach;
 - 13.10.6 forfeiture or reallocation of Match points (including Bonus Points);
 - 13.10.7 the suspension or expulsion of a Club, team, Player or person from a Competition;
 - 13.10.8 any other appropriate sanction (including educational based sanctions where applicable).

Acts of Misconduct

- 13.11 Any potential misconduct may be referred to the Discipline Manager under the Disciplinary Rules.

NOTICES

- 14.1 Any notice under these Rules must be in writing and sent by email. Notices sent by email are deemed received on the date of sending, unless proven otherwise.

OMMISSIONS, INTERPRETATION AND EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- 15.1 A Competitions Committee, Championship Committee, or Complaints Committee may, where justified, excuse a failure to comply with the Rules if it is resulted from a mistake, oversight, or other reasonable cause, on such conditions it determines.
- 15.2 With prior approval of the Board, the Championship Committee or Competition Committee may:
 - 15.2.1 decide matters not covered by the Rules and Regulations and take appropriate action;
 - 15.2.2 interpret the Rules and Regulations in line with their purpose and the interests of the game; and
 - 15.2.3 resolve inconsistencies and correct administrative errors.
- 15.3 Decisions made under **Rule 15.2** are final and binding, subject to any right of appeal under these Rules.

APPEALS

- 16.1 Any appeal against a decision made under these Competition Rules shall be submitted and determined in accordance with the Scottish Rugby Competition Appeals Process, as amended from time to time. The Competition Appeals Process forms a separate document to these Rules and sets out the grounds of appeal, the procedure to be followed, applicable timescales, and the powers of the Appeal Panel.

Appendix 1

Quick Guide to specific rules and regulations

This is not a conclusive list of all rules and regulations in place and clubs are expected to have read and observe all rules and regulations as outlined in this document.

Rule & Regulation	Sarah Beaney Cup	National Shield	National Plate	National Bowl
The U19 Scrummage Law Variations may apply	No		Yes	
Minimum number of starting players	A team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 12 Players)		A team may start a Match with fewer than 15 Players (but not less than 10 Players)	
Uncontested scrums	A Team must start the Match with a suitably experienced front row.		A Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times	A Match may start with uncontested scrums, subject to there being at least five Players in the scrum at all times
A Player must be registered with the club they are representing	Yes, Other than under Emergency Loan Regulations			
Transfer Deadline Date	14 th December 2026		Not Applicable	

Dual Registered Players	A dual-registered Player may not play for the first XV of their lower-placed Club unless at least 50% of their previous Competition (league and cup) Matches that season have been for the lower-placed club or where the Player has obtained the prior written permission of the Women's Competitions Committee.	
No. of replacements permitted	Up to seven (rolling substitutes permitted)	
Player matching required	No	Yes
Game On permitted	No	Yes