

1: Principal Rules and Laws

1.1 The competition shall be known as 'The WRU Dragons Cup'.

1.2 The format and all playing aspects of 'The WRU Dragons Cup' ("Competition") shall be overseen by the Participation Group and governed by the Governance Group of The District A Game Management Group (GMG).

1.3 The competition shall be played under the WRU Player Pathway directives and World Rugby Laws of the Game and in accordance with the WRU Code of Conduct relating to the game of rugby.

1.4 There is an additional competition for teams eliminated from The WRU Dragons Cup within the first round. This shall be known as 'The WRU Dragons Plate'. This will ensure that all teams entered in the competition play at least two matches. All references in this Rules and Guidelines document that refer to 'The WRU Dragons Cup' will be deemed to equally apply to 'The WRU Dragons Plate'.

2: The Teams

2.1 The Cup is open to teams within the Under 12,13,14,15 & 16's an Youth age groups, whose parent Clubs fall under the control of The District A Game Management Group.

2.2 All teams wishing to take part in the competition must notify the organisers by the 11th August prior to the first round draw. All Junior & Youth fixture secretaries are requested to discuss team registration numbers and team capabilities with each coach prior to entering teams into the draw to ensure that they can fulfil the Cup fixtures throughout the season.

2.3 Clubs who enter the competition and withdraw without a notable or supported reason, should note that this may impact negatively on future requests for that Club to take part in The WRU Dragons Cup Competition. Once notification has been received, the team will be deemed to have entered the competition and to have accepted the terms and conditions of entry.

3: Registration & Playing Squads

3.1 No player may represent a Club in the competition unless he or she is a registered playing member of that Club and registered with the WRU. No 'permits' are granted at the Junior Rugby level.

3.2 Each team entering The WRU Dragons Cup competition must take the field of play in a set of clearly numbered or lettered shirts. Blanks or shirts displaying names only are judged to be unsatisfactory for the competition.

3.3 The number of players eligible to play for a team are limited to the WRU Registered number of players for that team for The WRU Dragons Cup competition plus qualified players who play 'up' in line with the Pathway directives.

3.4 All players must be registered correctly with their respective clubs, and club officials must be satisfied that all registrations are justifiable and up to date prior to any game taking place.

3.5 When multiple age groups participate in The WRU Dragons Cup a player can only play for one team (age group) within his or her club and cannot switch to another team if the team that they are registered to are knocked out of the competition (e.g. a player who represented Team A at under 13s level in the competition cannot also represent Team A's under 14s team in the competition during the same season). If a player transfers Clubs during the season/competition but has already played for a team within the WRU Dragons Cup competition, he/she is 'cup tied' for that season and cannot play for another club in the competition.

3.6 Evidence that a Team or a Player has breached this ruling will result in the offending team being removed from the competition and the result being overturned if the offending team won.

3.7 In cases where there is a colour clash the home side are requested to change playing kit unless otherwise agreed with opposition. Should there be a colour clash at the Final stage the club named first in the tie is deemed as the Home side, therefore the above comes into play.

4: Matches

4.1 All fixtures and information relating the competition will appear on all forms of The District A Game Management Group social media channels along with the WRU Dragons Hub account @DragonsHUBs. Therefore, all clubs who wish to enter the competition must be able to view those channels on a regular basis.

4.2 Each round of fixtures will be drawn by an independent member of The District A Game Management Group, WRU employees/Board members or any other independent appointed person, following completion of the previous round.

4.3 Each round of fixtures will be given a 'To Be Played Before' date. Clubs are requested to make every effort to play prior to these dates to avoid a backlog of fixtures from round to round. It would be highly advisable to schedule the match as early as practicable within this period to allow for postponements due to inclement weather or other unavoidable factors.

4.4 It is up to the 'home' team to decide upon the date, time and location for the fixture, although teams should make reasonable efforts to accommodate the wishes of the 'away' team. Matches should be played on Sundays unless full agreement is reached by both teams to play it on another day of the week. If a dispute arises over the date etc. of the fixture the teams should refer to The District A Game Management Group and their decision will be final.

4.5 No refreshments, hire costs of transport or fuel allowance will be reimbursed by the WRU, The Dragons or the Game Management Group. The only exception to this is the payment of Referees Expenses at the Final Stages of the Competition when The District A Game Management Group will be responsible for the payment of the referee's expenses.

4.6 Should a tie be postponed due to inclement weather or the home sides pitch being unplayable then the tie can be switched to the opposition pitch, if both sides agree.

4.7 Early communication of this decision is advisable to ensure that players are not dropped off at the ground and left by the parents. The team who travel will now have the advantage of the 'Away' side should the game finish in a draw (see below).

4.8 If for any reason a team wishes to opt out of the competition at any time they need to send their request in writing to The District A Game Management Group. Additionally, they must inform their opponents immediately. Forfeiting games is not acceptable and may result in a team or club being omitted from the competition the following season.

4.9 In the event of a game being unable to go ahead due to clashes with school trips, tours or tournaments etc. then notification must be given to The District A Game Management Group and their opponents at the earliest opportunity.

4.10 The Dragons Cup supports the WRU Player Development and Player Pathway Structure. Whilst "The Dragons Cup" is a competition, it is anticipated that clubs will provide equal playing opportunities to each member of the squad as per the WRU Half A Game Initiative.

4.11 With regards to injuries affecting the ability to play a WRU Dragons Cup fixture each case will be looked at individually. However, teams are encouraged to play the game and use squad players.

4.12 In the event of a 50-point margin opening between two sides the referee is to stop the game immediately (in line with WRU Pathways guidance). The result will then be the final score before the game was stopped.

4.13 A maximum of 4 qualified adults are permitted pitch side during the games and are to stay within the technical area, other than the Physio/First Aider. They should wear coloured bibs to identify themselves, different colours to the other team and different again for the Physio/First Aider. This is for all games within the competition, not just the finals. The use of crowd barriers is fully supported by The District A Game Management Group and should be used to provide a safe exclusion zone for the teams on both sides.

5: The Competition

5.1 The WRU Dragons Cup is a knock-out competition for u12s – 14s with the team scoring the most points in the tie deemed the winner. U15s & 16s will be run as a group format competition up to the semifinal stage. Points are scored in line with WRU Pathways directions (Tries, Conversions, Penalties and Drop-Goals). If at the end of the game the teams are level on match points, then the following criteria will be used in the following order to determine the winner:

- i. Most tries scored.
- ii. If still level: The Away side, go through.

At the Semi Final stage of the U15 & U16's competitions the following criteria will be applied as the venue is Neutral:

- i. Most tries scored
- ii. Most penalties scored
- iii. If still level, tie will be decided by the toss of a coin, conducted by referee, winner progresses to the Cup Final.

5.2 No extra time is to be played.

5.3 In the case of the Cup Final being drawn, then the team scoring the highest number of tries will be declared the winners. If both teams are equal on try count, then both teams will be declared Joint Winners and receive a trophy each.

5.4 The District A Game Management Group will adjudicate on any disputes and their decision will be final.

6: Actions Prior to Kick Off

6.1 Team Managers must be able to show on any mobile device their team registrations, should they be asked by the opposing side. Failure to disclose and comply, if brought to the attention of The District A Game Management Group may lead to the non-complying team to be ejected from the competition with their opponents advancing by default.

6.2 The WRU requires that both teams shall field the same number of players. If a team cannot start with the required numbers, then the opposition must match the starting line- up of players in accordance with the Pathway rules. However, if a team cannot start a 15 a side game with a minimum of 13 players then the game is forfeited without question.

6.3 In the event of a yellow card at any of the competing age groups a period of 5 minutes suspension will apply. If a further yellow card is received by the same player, regardless of reason, will make a RED card. The player is then removed from the pitch for the games entirety and is unavailable for any further group games should this be the case.

6.4 In the event of a sending off or suspension, the non-offending team do not have to remove a player from the field or be disadvantaged in any way.

6.6 All players who are sent off will be reported by the referee to the WRU Rugby Disciplinary Committee.

6.7 An accumulation of cards, disciplinary issues or poor codes of conduct reports may result in the offending Junior Section being withdrawn from the competition across all participating age groups.

7: Scrums

7.1 Passive scrums are permitted from the start of the game and the score will stand. However, notification of the possibility of passive scrums must be disclosed to the opposition prior to the fixture. If a side cannot field a front row this is NOT a viable reason to cancel the game. Scrums will then become exclusively non-contested and there will be no striking on the opposition ball. All other pathway directives will apply and World Rugby Laws will apply.

8: Match Officials & Referees

8.1 The Referee for matches during the round stages will be appointed by the home side. The Referee must be independent of both Clubs.

8.2 If there are problems experienced with arranging a Referee please contact The District A Game Management Group.

8.3 Each of the competing teams must allocate a linesman to assist the Referee if required. They must act impartially. The Referee may choose to dismiss the services of one or both linesmen if they see fit or may choose to start the match without the services of linesmen. This is entirely the decision of the referee and must not be influenced by either team.

8.4 Referees at the Semi-Final and Final stages will be totally neutral and appointed by the District A Game Management Group.

8.5 All relevant disciplinary issues will be reported to the Welsh Rugby Union Disciplinary Panel. Issues concerning The Dragons Cup specifically will be reported to The District A Game Management Group.

8.6 Results from games must be reported to Chris Cornford (ccornford@wru.wales) or Ashley Sweet (asweet@wru.wales) 48hrs of the ties conclusion. They should also be posted on the District's Facebook Page. Any dispute appertaining to the game result should be referred to The District A GMG Group within 72hrs, where their decision will be final.

9: The Final

9.1 The Competition Finals for all age groups will take place in May 2024 (Date TBC). This will include the Cup and Plate Finals for U12,13, 14's, U15's, U16's and Youth Finals. The match referees will be neutral and appointed by the District A GMG/ WRU.

10: Important Dates

10.1 Teams should take note of the following dates for the 2023/24 competition. The U15s and U16s dates take into account the RAG and Dewar Shield dates when players will be unavailable for clubs.

Rounds to be held at Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 24th Sep 23 – U15s Day 1 – Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 1st Oct 23 – U15s Day 2 – Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 22nd Oct 23 – U15s Semi Finals – Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 11th Feb 24 – U13s Semi Finals – Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 25th Feb 24 – U16s Day 1 – Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 3rd Mar 24 – U16s Day 2 – Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 10th Mar 24 – U14s Semi Finals – Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 17th Mar 24 – U16s Semi Finals – Ystrad Mynach

Sunday 24th Mar 24 – U12s Semi Finals – Ystrad Mynach

Dates relevant through the season for all age groups:

Entry Deadline	Friday 11th Aug 2023
Cup Preliminary round draw	W/b Monday 4th Sep 2023 (video release by Friday 8th Sep)
Cup Preliminary round TBPB	Sunday 1st Oct 2023
Plate Preliminary Round Draw	2nd Oct 2023
Plate Preliminary Round TBPB	Sunday 29th Oct 2023
Cup First round TBPB	Sunday 29th Oct 2023
Cup/Plate Quarter Final draw	W/b Monday 30th Oct 2023 (video release by Friday 3rd Nov)
Cup/Plate QF Prelim TBPB	Sunday 3rd Dec 2023
Cup/Plate Quarter Final TBPB	Sunday 28th Jan 2024
Cup/Plate Semi Final draw	W/b Monday 29th Jan 2024 (video release by Friday 2nd Feb)
Cup/Plate Semi Final TBPB	U13s Sunday 11th Feb 2024 U14s 10th Mar 2024 U12s Sunday 14th Apr 2024
Finals Weekend	May 24