

EMMJRA COMPETITION RULES – 2025-2026

1. EMMJRA competitions are subject to RFU Regulations, especially Regulation 15 Age Grade Rugby and IRB law variations for U19 rugby where applicable. RFU codes of practice also apply.

Player Eligibility

2. All players must be registered with on the RFU Game Management System (GMS) and affiliated to their home club in advance of a team sheet being submitted. Requests for proof of GMS registration may be made before the game starts by the opposition or EMMJRA. If proof of GMS registration cannot be provided for an individual, then that player cannot take part. If proof of GMS registration cannot be provided for a squad then the game will be ruled as conceded although the game should still be played as a friendly.
3. Team sheets for games, showing player names, dob, RFU ID and playing number/initials must be forwarded to EMMJRA on the forms provided on the day before the fixture. They can be amended up to Kick-off. At the discretion of EMMJRA an earlier deadline may be set.

Playing out of age

4. Players may 'play up' and 'play down' in EMMJRA competitions only in accordance with RFU reg 15. An individual playing up into an older age group must have the necessary assessment carried out in line with RFU best practice, and approval given by EMMJRA Safeguarding lead at least 48 hours before kickoff. Where a Club is using players either playing up or down the opposing team must be made aware at least 48 hours before the match via email, and must be clearly marked on the teamsheet. EMMJRA can assist in linking Clubs if necessary. Where a player joins an older age group (age groups up to U16) for an EMMJRA cup/league game, they are then ineligible to play back in the lower age group for the remainder of that competition. A Where this means a lower age group may have fewer eligible players in a lower age group than are required to fulfil a fixture later in the season, EMMJRA must be consulted prior to agreement to the player playing up. Teams are permitted to combine in EMMJRA competitions only in accordance with the provisions of Regulation 15 for the coming season.

Squads

5. EMMJRA encourage Clubs to bring all the players they can on match day, whether or not they are part of the playing squad. All players should participate in warm up activities. A playing squad of 22 is to be selected from registered players (and guests if applicable). This number may be exceeded if agreed between both clubs, but cannot be reduced without the agreement, in advance, of EMMJRA.. Each side will field replacements during the course of the match on a rolling basis. If a team has fewer than 15 players every effort must be made to even up the numbers before the game starts, which may include loaning players to the opposition. With agreement of coaches in advance of the game, results in such circumstances will stand. The expectation is that such agreement will be reached. Half game protocols will be followed; Clubs should select as many players as are available, up to a maximum of 22, and ALL players must play at least half a game (injuries excepted). Where fewer players than 22 are selected but more than 22 are registered on GMS, EMMJRA may request an explanation from the Club. EMMJRA may alter required squad numbers for specific competitions. Waterfall tournaments and friendly fixtures should utilise all available players.
6. Both teams must play with an equal number of players (except in the case of yellow and/or red cards), any extra players being available as replacements. In cases where the game starts with fewer than 15 a-side the duration of the game may be shortened to reflect the number of players involved. The game can continue competitively down to 10 a side. Where a team goes below 15, players may be loaned from the opposition, or both teams are reduced to the same number.

7. If on any occasion a front-row player requires to be replaced and their team cannot (for any reason, including injury, temporary blood injury, temporary exclusion following a yellow card, or permanent exclusion following a red card) provide a replacement, or another suitably trained and experienced player from the nominated squad, or by loaning, to enable the match to continue safely with contested scrums, the match will continue with uncontested scrums. The team concerned shall be entitled to replace the player whose departure caused the uncontested scrums in order to maintain playing numbers. On return to the field of play of the front-row player who had been temporarily excluded or injured, the Match shall continue with contested scrums. If a team is unable to field a front row at the commencement of the match then it shall, with the prior agreement of EMMJRA, commence with uncontested scrums, and the result will stand.

Guest players

9. In all EMMJRA competitions, a Club may field up to five 'guest players' in any 22 player squad. Guests are players registered with another Club. Guests are limited: Only 1 Academy player is permitted to guest in any game for each Club. Club/DPP players may play up to 5 games as a guest for other Clubs, East Midlands players may play up to 2, and Academy players 1. In every case, this is designed to allow fixtures to be fulfilled, and not for squad strengthening. A Club wishing to use a guest must gain permission from EMMJRA in advance, setting out reasons why they cannot fulfil a fixture in any other case. The opposition must be informed in advance (including the level of player). There is no limit to the number of guests that can be fielded in a non competition game, but in all cases, all available Club squad members must be used in preference to guests.

Scoring

10. League / Waterfall games will be scored 4 points for a win, 2 points for a draw and 1 point for a loss. If a game is conceded the score will be recorded as 21 – 0, and the losing side will NOT be awarded a losing point. If a match is conceded but continues as a friendly, the side conceding will be awarded 1 point. **Whenever possible the EMMJRA Competitions Secretary and the opposition should be made aware of a need to concede a game no later than the Monday evening before the fixture date.** However, walk-overs will only be recorded on the play-by date of the fixture. If on that date the game could not have been played due to weather or pitch restrictions the walk-over will not stand and the game will be rescheduled.
11. Matches must be ended if the point's difference is more than 50 points unless both teams agree to continue. If the fixture continues the score will pause, and the remainder of the game will be played as a friendly without scoring. The recorded result will be the score at the time the points difference reaches or passes 50. Should this rule be breached either in official reporting or on any social media associated with or appearing to be from a club, the result will be reversed.
11. If a team withdraws from the league, prior to completing all matches, their corresponding results will be removed from the league table.

League Position/Promotion/Relegation

12. In the event of a league table points tie on completion of the league programme, the winner will be determined by the following criteria in the order stated: A) Games won excluding walkovers B) Points for/against score difference, C) The result of the paired match that was played between those Clubs. If for any reason not all games are played, final league positions will be determined by games won as percentage of the games actually played.
13. From each league the top Club may be promoted, and the bottom Club may be relegated. Although for all age grades promotion/relegation is subject to a final review based on ability and results, and the number and strength of teams entered in each league.

Deciding results in the event of equal points scored

14. In all Cup or Plate matches, except for a Final, if after full time the scores are level, the team scoring that has scored most tries shall be the winner. If a result is not obtained by this method, then the team which has scored most conversions following tries shall be the winner. If a decision is still not forthcoming the away team will be declared the winner.
15. In a Cup or Plate Final, if after full time the scores are level, the team that has scored most tries shall be the winner. If a result is not obtained by this method; then the team that has scored most conversions from tries shall be the winner. If a result is not obtained by this method the team that has scored most penalties and drop goals shall be the winner. If a result is not obtained by this method the team that scored the first try (1) or the first drop goal (2) or the first penalty (3) in that order, shall be the winner. If a result is still not forthcoming the competition win shall be shared.

If a cup competition cannot be completed due to weather conditions, every effort will be made to reschedule the fixture, at the sole discretion of the competition organiser.. Where this is not possible, the cup/plate will be shared. EMMJRA and other sub-county or club fixtures cannot be played 'Out of Season', unless the game conditions applied are in line with the prevailing RFU 'Guide to Summer Activity', or by exceptional agreement to extend the season (for which EMMJRA would require permission of the RFU)

Playing and Play By dates

16. U14 – U16 male fixtures are usually played on Sunday's, with a recommended kick off time of 11am. Female fixtures are usually played on a Sunday afternoon. U17 & U18 male fixtures are usually played on Saturday afternoons. Where a Kickoff date or time cannot be agreed, this will be stipulated by EMMJRA.
16. Clubs are encouraged to play fixtures earlier than the play by date (taking account of the Age Grade Playing Calendar schedule). If an earlier date cannot be agreed, the EMMJRA play by date takes precedence. Any postponed fixture is to be rescheduled to the next available EMMJRA Competition free Sunday (U14 – U16) and Saturday (U17 & U18). In cases of doubt, EMMJRAs assessment of the next available date is binding.
18. Games are to be played by the specified date unless bad weather or pitch playability intervenes. Games can be played any time up to the play by date, and this should be agreed between the two Clubs. EMMJRA will notify all Clubs of any extension to a play by date. This will apply to ALL fixtures in a league or cup. Individual requests for extensions will not be approved. The postponement of any game must be notified immediately to EMMJRA, who will specify the revised play by date. Where Clubs agree a date, EMMJRA agreement is required prior to the fixture being confirmed.
19. Playing times will be determined in line with Regulation 15, and may be reduced in cases where games are being played with modified numbers.
19. EMMJRA League and Cup competition dates will only be moved to a later date than that published due to weather intervention or pitch conditions preventing safe play, and where a later date is agreed, it will apply to all fixtures in that round.
20. EMMJRA Competition fixtures may only be played in a non-competition week (see Age Grade Playing Calendar) with the agreement of both Clubs, and ALL schools who may have Club players involved in school competitions.
21. Any Club using players from a younger age group to fulfil league or cup fixtures (see Playing Out of Age) must take account of maximum player time, and scheduled game time. Clubs must allow enough time to play all games; extensions will not be approved based on age groups 'doubling up'
22. Schools within the CB must not schedule games so as to prevent registered club players from being available for EMMJRA games played in EMMJRA competition weeks. Non-availability

due to non Age Grade Playing Calendar schools matches is not a justified reason for a Club fixture to be moved. Where a school fixture prevents an EMMJRA competition game from taking place, the game may, at the discretion of EMMJRA, either be rescheduled, or be awarded as a walkover.

Cancellations

23. The home Club is to report cancellations immediately to the EMMJRA Competitions Secretary, East Midlands Referees and the opposition team following a pitch inspection or a Club Welfare Officer risk assessment.

Officials

24. All fixtures for which an EMRURS referee is requested must be registered with EMRURS at least two weeks prior to the fixture. Where both Clubs agree to a qualified EMRURS referee as a 'Club appointment' this is permissible. Where a society referee cannot be appointed, a non-Society referee may be used, provided he/she is fully qualified and experienced, and is preferably from either a neutral Club or is associated with a different age group to the proposed fixture. Both Clubs must agree to this choice of referee. Where agreement cannot be reached, representation must be made to the EMMJRA comp secretary who will decide whether the proposed referee is suitable. If an EMRURS referee cannot be appointed, it is the responsibility of BOTH clubs to source an official. Where this does not happen, and as a result the fixture cannot take place, the match will be declared 0-0.

Conduct & Welfare

25. Respect barriers MUST be used at all EMMJRA Junior fixtures. Where a Club cannot provide such a barrier, the game will be awarded to the opposition. Technical areas must be set out and used in all games.
26. Any dismissal during an EMMJRA competition match must be notified through EMRURS protocols, whether or not an EMRURS appointed referee is officiating, and also be notified to EMMJRA by the Club of the offending player(s). Any incident involving abuse to an official by a coach or supporter, which is upheld by EMRURS, will result in the fixture being awarded to the opposition.
27. Where a player is placed on the RFU concussion protocol as a result of an incident on or off the pitch, at Club or school, the Club must inform EMMJRA safeguarding officer via email. The Concussion Form, held by the Club's Safeguarding Officer, must be completed and returned within 48 hrs of date of the said incident. Where such an injury occurs in an EM match, or comes to the attention of EM coaches, they will inform the Club and the Safeguarding Officer.
28. There is NO Head Injury Assessments allowed in the Community Game and players sustaining a head injury or suspected head injury must be removed from the field of play. Where there is a disagreement, the final decision lies with EMRURS or match appointed referee or EMMJRA officials present.
28. Each club is to provide a first aider.
29. No smoking or vaping around pitches or players by coaches or officials
30. All celebrations must be age-appropriate; no glass bottles, no alcoholic or non-alcoholic 'fizz' spraying!
31. Team talks are to take place outside, and adults should not enter changing rooms, except in an emergency, and then only in pairs.

Results

31. It is the responsibility of the home Club to submit the result to the EMMJRA Competitions Secretary by 18:00 on the day of the match using the link provided. If the result is sent via a text an official notification must still be received within 24 hours for recording purposes. If the result is not received from the home Club by 18:00 on play by date, then the result shall be recorded as an away win. Results must not be posted directly onto Pitchero websites by Clubs.

Precedence

32. National U18 fixtures will take precedence over an EMMJRA Competition fixture. EMMJRA Competition fixtures, except for National Colts matches, will take precedence over any other fixture or competition without exception. For the avoidance of doubt, EMMJRA Cup fixtures take precedence over League fixtures. Both take precedence over Sub county competitions, other CB competitions, and friendly fixtures. A Club failing to field a side for a competition fixture must not subsequently play any other fixture on the same weekend.

Communication

33. All communication, other than the reporting of results, should come via the Club MiniJunior Chairman or Coordinator. Any dispute must be reported by email to the EMMJRA Competitions Secretary within 48 hours of the match being completed.
34. A breach of any of these rules may result in sanctions being applied across all EMMJRA competitions for which a Club is entered. These sanctions may include (but are not restricted to) points deduction, fixture being awarded to the opposing side, fixture being replayed, the age group or Club being removed from current or future EMMJRA competitions.

Breach of rule	Lower	Mid	High
Playing out of age Incorrect assessment, no form submitted	Warning to Club from EMRU Safeguarding Officer and reassessment of player	Forfeit match and associated points	Removal of team from EMMJRA competitions
Squads Incorrect match day squad size, failure to abide by half match rule	Warning to Club from EMMJRA Chairman	Match to be replayed, a meeting with Club M&J Chairman and EMMJRA Committee appointees	Match awarded to opposition
Player Transfers/Registration Incorrectly registered players	Warning from EMMJRA Chairman to Club	Forfeit of match and associated points	Removal of team from EMMJRA competitions
Playing/Play by dates Continued requests for postponement of matches after play by dates for non-weather /safety reasons Playing friendly matches when cancelling EMMJRA competition fixtures	A meeting with Club officials and EMMJRA committee	Match awarded to opposition	Removal of team from EMMJRA competition
Officials Continued failure to register matches with EMRURS and/or use of non-independent referees	Warning from EMMJRA Chairman to Club	Match to be replayed	Meeting with Club Officials and EMMJRA with the potential sanction of removal from EMMJRA competitions
Conduct & Welfare	Warning from EM Safeguarding Officer	Matches watched by EMMJRA for set amount of time	East Midlands Disciplinary procedure

Sanction Guidelines for Clubs

This list of sanctions is not exhaustive and may be amended at the appropriate time should the need arise. Any proven incidence of MAO will be dealt with at the high end of sanctions and the match will be awarded to the opposition; this applies to players, coaches and spectators.

All sanctions are at the discretion of the EMMJRA Committee. Some sanctions will be for Clubs and not for specific age groups. The right of appeal would be in writing to the CBRDP Chairman for his final decision within seven days from the sanction being advised by the EMMJRA Committee.

The EMMJRA Committee reserves the right to alter or to add to any of the above rules during the season if such a requirement is deemed necessary. The decision of the EMMJRA Committee will be final and binding.