

NSW SUBURBAN RUGBY UNION COMPETITION NOTES 2026

Men's Competitions

MATCH TIMING

- The duration of matches shall be:

Grade	Each Half
1st	40 mins
2nd	35 mins
Colts	35 mins
3rds	30 mins
4ths	25 mins
5ths	25 mins

All matches must end two minutes before the designated kick off time of the next match. Do not go beyond the two-minute buffer, regardless of stoppages.

- Only first grade matches will have injury time added to the playing time.
- A minimum of 11 players (XVs) or 7 players (10s) is needed to constitute a team in Suburban Rugby. Any team unable to field the minimum players within ten minutes of the official kick-off time, or at any stage during the match, for whatever reason, including temporary suspensions or send-offs, shall forfeit the match without right of appeal. Teams playing against an opposition with less than the maximum players (15 or 10) are not required to match opposition team numbers.

AWARDING OF MEDAL POINTS

- Referees for ALL 1st Grade and Colts matches must award best & fairest medal points on a 3-2-1 basis through the Fusesport app (see the team managers after the game).

RECORDING RESULTS IN FUSESPORT APP

- Team managers should check with you at the end of the match before they submit the results that they both have recorded correctly the score and any cards issued (red, yellow or blue). At this point, get the name of any players you have sent off.

MEETING OF FIVE

- Do not start the match until you have met, on-field and together, with two bibbed ground marshals and two uniformed ARs.
- Grounds must be set up to keep spectators at least 5m from the playing field where possible.
- Report any issues with clubs meeting these requirements to Kim Taufa. Some lenience may be allowed early in the season, but if you don't report it, it won't fix itself.
- Brief your ARs on your expectations and make them feel valued.

REPLACEMENT OF PLAYERS

Please remember the Laws and procedures concerning player replacement:

- A maximum of eight interchanges per team per match will be allowed for all teams (Sutherland Cup and Halligan Cup may do more with agreement of both teams and the referee). Grose Cup (2nd grade, Div 5) will have a maximum of ten interchanges per team per match.
- Interchanges shall include any time one player replaces another player, including for injury. A player removed due to suspected concussion is deemed to be injured. Within the allowed eight player interchanges, there is no restriction on the number of times an individual player can be replaced or return to the field.
- Exceptions
 - (a) Injury as a result of suspected concussion or foul play
 - (i) If a player is replaced as a result of a suspected concussion (the referee displays a blue card) or as a result of foul play (which is acknowledged by the referee and the player is replaced immediately after the incident) that replacement does not count as an interchange.
 - (b) Temporary Replacement – Blood Injury
 - (i) If a player has a blood injury and is temporarily replaced by another player that does NOT count as an interchange.
 - (ii) If the blood player returns to the field of play within fifteen (15) minutes actual time and the temporary replacement leaves the field that does NOT count as an interchange.
 - (iii) If the blood player does not return to the field of play within the permitted time, the replacement becomes permanent and that IS counted as an interchange. The blood player is considered injured.
 - (iv) Should a team use up its maximum number of interchanges while one of their players has been temporarily replaced for blood, and the blood player cannot return to the field within the permitted time, the temporary replacement will be required to leave the field at the conclusion of the permitted time i.e. the team plays one short.
 - (c) Temporary Suspension – Yellow Card
 - (i) When a player is temporarily suspended (yellow card) and leaves the field of play that is NOT an interchange.
 - (d) Temporary Suspension – Yellow Card – Front Row Player
 - (i) When a scrum is ordered during the temporary suspension of a front-row player (Player A), and as a result a player (Player B) is required to leave the field to allow another front-row player (Player C) to come on, that does NOT count as an interchange.
 - (ii) If, at the end of the period of temporary suspension, Player A resumes and Player C leaves the field that does NOT count as an interchange.
 - (iii) Player B returning to the field of play is also NOT an interchange.
 - (iv) If, however, the team opts to leave Player C on at the end of the temporary suspension period instead of Player A returning, that IS an interchange.
 - (v) Player B returning to the field of play to replace another player during the period of temporary suspension IS an interchange.
 - (e) Send Off – Red Card
 - (i) When a player is sent from the field of play (red card) that is NOT an interchange.
 - (f) Send Off – Red Card – Front Row Player
 - (i) When a scrum is ordered after the sending off of a front-row player (Player A), and as a result a player (Player B) is required to leave the field to allow another front-row player (Player C) to come on, that does NOT count as an interchange.
 - (ii) Player B returning to the field of play to substitute another player IS an interchange.

- Any player replaced due to injury (except temporarily for blood) may not for any reason return to that match or any subsequent matches played on that day. At matches where there is no doctor available, the Referee remains responsible for establishing if a player is leaving the field of play due to being so injured that it would be unwise for him to continue playing.
- After eight interchanges have been made, no other replacements will be allowed for any reason, except for an injury to a front-row player where a suitably trained front-row replacement is available to ensure the game can continue with contested scrums. In this situation only, an additional interchange may be made.
- Any replacement who takes the field immediately following the awarding of a penalty kick to his team or after a try has been scored shall not be permitted to kick at goal until after the relevant kick has been taken.

Procedure For Rolling Replacements

- Sequentially numbered replacement cards indicating Home 1 - 8 and Away 1 - 8 have been provided to each team and to you. Only use your cards if a team does not provide their own.
- As each replacement takes to the field he shall hand the appropriate replacement card in the correct sequence to you (or the AR if you delegate the responsibility). There is no requirement to record or write anything on the replacement card. The correct sequentially numbered card is simply handed over.
- You receive and retain the cards during the match and monitor each team's use of its substitutes. You are not required to record any information - you simply retain the submitted cards until after the end of the match. **Cards must be returned at the conclusion of a match.**

UNCONTESTED SCRUMS

- **No penalties apply for playing uncontested scrums in the Sutherland or Halligan Cups.**
- All teams must have five players who can play in the front row to ensure that on the first occasion that a replacement hooker is required, and on the first occasion that a replacement prop forward is required, the team can continue to play safely with contested scrums.
- Should a team not be able to meet this obligation for any reason during a game, then at the point in the match when the front row replacement is required, this team must play with one player fewer than would otherwise be allowed.
- Should a team commence the game with a full side (15 players) and contested scrums, and then go to uncontested scrums as a result of an injury, temporary suspension or send-off, then both teams must continue to play with 8 players in the scrum.
- Should a team not have three suitably trained front row players to commence a game with contested scrums, this team must play with one player fewer than would otherwise be allowed.
- If, subsequently, a qualified front rower becomes available (or returns from either blood-bin or temporary suspension) so that scrums can be contested then that player will be allowed onto the field and the team may return to the appropriate complement of players.
- If neither team has suitably trained front row players to start a game with contested scrums, the above arrangements do not apply to the game, even if qualified front rowers subsequently become available.

MANDATORY RED CARD FOR STRIKING

- Subbies has implemented a mandatory red card for any incident of intentional striking. Striking remains the #1 offence at judiciary and this stance is designed to wipe the behavior from the game. You must see the strike and it must connect in order for the offence to be sanctioned. Note when filling out a send-off report, that striking is always intentional.

WATER RUNNERS

- You should insist that only three persons per team can attend to players. Those three attendants **MUST** wear bibs. All other persons, including coaches, must remain outside the playing area bounded by the ropes or enclosure.

GROUND MARSHALS

- Each club must provide a Ground Marshal (wearing an orange bib) to act as your liaison. Please make sure the Ground Marshals are introduced to you, and know that you will hold them responsible for rectifying any problems you bring to them.
- The Ground Marshal should offer you complimentary food and beverages at the conclusion of your match.

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Joy Johnson Cup (Women's Xs) Competitions

The following rule and/or law variations apply to all NSWSRU Women's Xs matches:

- Match duration is 20 min halves, 5 min half time, no injury time, 5 min sin bins.
- Teams are allowed a maximum of 15 players – 10 on the field and 5 reserves/subs. There are unlimited rolling substitutions.
- For penalty and conversion kicks, the kicker may choose a place kick or drop kick. There is a 60 second time limit to take a kick.
- The try scoring team restarts the match with a drop kick.
- **Uncontested Scrums:**
 - When a team is unable to contest scrums their opposing team, when awarded a scrum, will have the choice of a free kick or an uncontested scrum.
 - When the team unable to contest scrums is awarded a scrum, it will be an uncontested scrum.
 - If both teams are unable to contest scrums, then uncontested scrums will be played regardless of who is awarded the scrum.
- **Mercy Rule:**
 - If the score differential reaches 40 points in a match:
 - The trailing team will add to the number of players on the field by one.
 - If the trailing team is unable to add a player, the leading team must reduce the number of players on the field by one.
 - The trailing team gets a free tap to restart after a try is scored by either team.
 - If the difference subsequently reduces to less than 40 points, player numbers and restart rules revert to normal.
 - If the score differential reaches 50 points:
 - The trailing team will add another player on the field. (i.e. 12 players on the field)
 - If the trailing team is unable to add another player, the leading team must reduce the number of players on the field by two.
 - The trailing team gets a free tap to restart after a try is scored by either team.
 - If the difference subsequently reduces to less than 50 points, the leading team goes back to being one player short.
 - Teams who are required to reduce players under the Mercy Rule must not remove front row players so as to cause the team to play uncontested scrums.

AWARDING OF MEDAL POINTS

- Referees for ALL Joy Johnson Cup (Subbies Women's 10s comp) matches must award best & fairest medal points on a 3-2-1 basis through the Fusesport app (see the team managers after the game).