



U.S.R.F.R.

USRFR Competition Regulations Summary Document Season 2025-26**Adult Rugby (Men and Women)**

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- Rolling subs are permitted in **ALL** adult matches.
- Law 3.8 (table below) applies to most matches but several competitions are ***exempt** from this Law. Please check the table at the bottom of this page.

Squad size	Minimum number of front row players in squad	Must be able to replace at the first time of asking
15 or fewer	3	
16, 17 or 18	4	Either a prop or hooker (i.e. first front row player)
19, 20, 21 or 22	5	Both a prop and a hooker (i.e. first prop and hooker)
23	6	LH prop, TH prop and Hooker

- Law 3.17 applies to all adult matches – ***‘a player who’s departure has caused uncontested scrums cannot be replaced unless that player has gone off for a blood injury, head injury (recognise and remove) or as a result of foul play’.***
- Uncontested scrums as a result of a sending off, temporary suspension or injury must have 8 v 8 at all times (Law 3.15). Uncontested scrums may have less players under other circumstances e.g. when using ‘Game On’.
- All adult league and cup matches will last 40 mins each half (unless advised differently by organisers).
- All adult cup matches (excluding Club Academy) will have 10 mins each half of extra time. In event of a draw in Club Academy matches winner is determined by first try scorer, then first point scorer and then on toss of a coin.
- Competitions marked **U19 scrum law** use **full U19 scrum law (this includes numbers in the scrum)**.
- **The 60 point rule is used in all adult games – once a 60 point difference in score is reached the game ends as a contest.**

Competition (Men’s)	Max Squad size / Other	Competition (Women’s)	Max Squad size / Other
Championship League 1, 2 & 3	18	Women’s Ulster Premiership League	22
Second XV League	18	Women’s Ulster Championship League A	22 <i>Game on may be used.</i>
Club Academy Competitions	22 U19 scrum law	Women’s Ulster Championship League B	22, U19 scrum law <i>Game on may be used.</i>
Provincial Premier League 1 & 2	18 *exempt	Women’s Junior Cup / Shield	22
Provincial Regional Leagues <i>Game on may be used.</i>	18 *exempt U19 scrum law	Suzanne Fleming Cup / Shield	22 Lower teams scrum law <i>Game on may be used (exception: Contested Scrums required for competitive fixture)</i>
Regional Leagues. <i>Game on may be used.</i>	18 *exempt U19 scrum law		
Senior Cup / Shield (group stages)	20		
Senior Cup / Shield (Final)	22		
Junior Cup / Shield, Towns Cup, McCrea Cup & Gordon West Cup/Plate (up to 1/4 final)	18		
Junior Cup / Shield, Towns Cup, McCrea Cup & Gordon West Cup/Plate (Semi- final and final)	20		
Crawford Cup & Plate	18 *exempt		
Forster Cup & Plate, McCambley Cup, Butler Shield.	18 *exempt U19 scrum law		



U.S.R.F.R

Age grade (Schools / Youth)



U.S.R.F.R

- Rolling subs are permitted in Youth competitions but **NOT** in Schools competitions – unless advised by a competition organiser.
- Law 3.17 **does not** apply to any age grade rugby so a team which loses a front row player due to injury does not need to lose a player i.e. the player may be replaced.
- Scrums must always have equal numbers.
- **The 40 point rule is used in all age grade games – once a 40 point difference in score is reached the game ends as a contest.**
- There is NO extra time in any age grade match. (Injury time can be played but please use common sense).
- Age grade regs are on the Ulster Rugby website, but are summarised here as a guide only.
- Please report any issues to the Branch.

Schools competition	Max Squad Size	Duration	Ball size	Lineout lifting	Sin bin
Senior school e.g. 1 st XV, 2 nd XV	23	70 mins	5	Yes	7 mins
Medallion	23	60 mins	4	Yes	5 mins
U14 & below (Grammar & High)	23	50 mins	4	Yes	5 mins
High Schools U16 Cup/trophy	23	60 mins	5	Yes	5 mins
Girls Schools Cup	Currently 7 a side. Competition organisers will advise	Competition organisers will advise			

Club Youth competition	Players in squad	Duration	Ball size	Lineout lifting	Sin bin
U18 Boys	Min 12 / Max 22. Team numbers do not need to match	70 mins	5	Yes	7 mins
U16 Boys	Min 12 / Max 22. Team numbers do not need to match	60 mins	5	Yes	5 mins
U14 Boys	Min 12 / Max 22. Team numbers do not need to match	50 mins	4	No	5 mins
U18 Girls	Min 12 / Max 23. Team numbers must match	70 mins	4	Yes	7 mins
U16 Girls	Min 12 / Max 23. Team numbers must match	60 mins	4	Yes	5 mins
U14 Girls	Min 10/Max 23. Team numbers must match	50 mins	4	Yes (if both teams agree)	5 mins

Further information about all of these regulations can be found on the referee section on the Ulster Rugby website