



RFU

RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

**Advice for Referees
when abandoning a
Rugby Match**

September 2022

ADVICE FOR REFEREES WHEN ABANDONING A RUGBY MATCH

Abandoning a game of rugby should always be a last resort. Where possible manage the situation to enable the match to run to completion.

Always report an abandoned match using the Match Abandonment Form. Complete page 1 for all cases and, if the cause is discipline or safeguarding related, you should also complete page 2.

There are several reasons you may be forced to abandon a match. Below you will find specific guidance for handling and reporting the most common causes:

Weather conditions

If the weather conditions pose a risk to the safety and wellbeing of players, officials or spectators, a match may be abandoned at any time. Adult RFU Competition matches abandoned due to weather before 60 minutes have been played will be replayed.

Pitch conditions

If in the opinion of the referee or any official from either team, it is considered that the pitch conditions are unsafe, then every effort should be made to move to a pitch where conditions are satisfactory to complete the match.

Serious Injury

If a serious injury prevents the player being moved and the match restarting, every effort should be made to relocate to another pitch to complete the match.

Disciplinary issues

If serious disciplinary issues arise and the referee or any club official deems it unsafe to complete the game, it may be forced to be abandoned. Every effort should be made to diffuse disciplinary issues before that point however only if it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Other safeguarding concerns

If any other safeguarding concerns arise, and it is not possible to ensure the safety or wellbeing of those taking part, then the match may be abandoned. Every effort should be made to engage with both teams and all participants to remove the safeguarding risk and enable the match to continue.

Other issues

If the weather conditions pose a risk to the safety and wellbeing of players, officials or spectators, a match may be abandoned at any time. Adult RFU Competition matches abandoned due to weather before 60 minutes have been played will be replayed.

In completing the Match Abandonment form, please be concise and focus on recording facts. Do not include conjecture or hearsay. Where possible identify in your report any individuals directly involved in causing the decision to abandon, also any witnesses who may be able to provide supporting evidence.

If in doubt when completing the report, your Referees Society can offer guidance as can the CB Disciplinary Secretary (and CB Age Grade Disciplinary Secretary for age grade games).



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