

UNDER 20 HEARTLAND SERIES

Hurricanes Under 20 Cup



PART A – SERIES FORMAT

1. The Under 20 Heartland Series

- a. As of 1 January 2023, the Under 20 Heartland Series (the Series) is played annually in a Round-Robin format between four teams: Poverty Bay; Horowhenua-Kapiti; Wairarapa-Bush and Whanganui.
- b. The purpose of the Series is three-fold: (i) to provide promising Under 20 players from the Hurricanes Heartland Unions who are eligible to be selected, the opportunity to be considered for selection in the Hurricanes Under 20 Team; (ii) to provide other Under 20 players from Hurricanes Heartland Unions with an opportunity to play representative rugby in a competitive environment; and (iii) to select a Heartland Team to play in the Hurricanes Under 19 Tournament for the Central Region Shield.
- c. The Series will be played over three rounds in July and August, with each team playing all other teams once. In 2023, the first round will be played with the first and third ranked teams hosting their opponents¹. The second and third rounds will be played on consecutive days on one weekend.

2. Draw

- a. For the 2023 Series, the draw is per the table below:

DATE	TIME	TEAM 1	TEAM 2	VENUE
29/07/23	1300	Whanganui	Poverty Bay	Napier
		Horowhenua Kapiti	Wairarapa Bush	Masterton
05/08/23	1300	Whanganui	Wairarapa Bush	Bulls RFC
		Horowhenua Kapiti	Poverty Bay	Bulls RFC
06/08/23	1030	Whanganui	Horowhenua Kapiti	Bulls RFC
		Wairarapa Bush	Poverty Bay	Bulls RFC

- b. The draw for subsequent years will be based on the final ranking of each team at the prior year's Development Series, per the table on the following page.

¹ Home advantage in Round 1 will be (with consideration to ranking) for teams who played away in the prior year.

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Round 1
4 th Ranked v 1 st Ranked
3 rd Ranked v 2 nd Ranked
Round 2
1 st Ranked v 3 rd Ranked
2 nd Ranked v 4 th Ranked
Round 3
1 st Ranked v 2 nd Ranked
3 rd Ranked v 4 th Ranked

3. Development Series Ranking Points

- a. While the Series is not a Tournament (in keeping with the Series' purpose described in 1.b. above), it is acknowledged that participating teams will rank their performance relative to their opposition. The Series will therefore award Ranking Points which will apply to the draw for each subsequent year.
- b. Teams will gain the following amount of Ranking Points in each fixture:
 - 4 points for a win;
 - 2 points for a draw;
 - 1 point for a loss by 7 or less; and
 - 1 point for scoring 4 or more tries.
- c. If at the end of the Series teams are tied, rankings are to be determined using the following criteria:
 - the First Ranked Team for the following season is the team that beat the other team when they played their Round-Robin fixture; or
 - if they drew, then the First Ranked Team for the following season is the team with the highest points differential in the Tournament (i.e. the team with greatest positive difference between for-and-against points); or
 - if still tied, the First Ranked Team for the following season is the team that scored the most tries in the Series; or
 - if still tied, then the First Ranked Team for the following season is to be decided by a coin toss.

The above criteria also apply for 2nd and 3rd placings, if necessary.

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4. Player Eligibility

- a. All players must be under 20 years of age as at 1 January in the year that they are playing in the Series.

5. Squad Size/Player Numbers

- a. For each match, 23 players with three specialist front rowers on the bench.

6. Replacement of Players

- a. As this is a Round-Robin Series, different players can play in each of the Series rounds. But the players must come from the squad of 23 players designated by each Provincial Union for the Series.

7. Playing Time

- a. All games will be played in two halves of 40 minutes each excluding injury time.
 - b. There will be no extra time for draws.
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PART B – SERIES ADMINISTRATION

1. Series Administrator

- a. In order to ensure all the administration associated with the Series is completed in a timely and thorough manner, the Council will appoint a Series Administrator from the Council's Operations Committee.
- b. Specifically, the Series Administrator is responsible for:
 - i. promulgation of the Series Draw by 10 April each year²;
 - ii. maintaining the Series Results Table;
 - iii. completing a check that all players listed on Team Sheets are also listed on the Provincial Union Schedules confirming that their players are eligible to participate in the Series;
 - iv. promulgating Series results to all participating Provincial Union Offices within two working days of a fixture;
 - v. producing Administration Instructions for the Series as needed;

² Or such other date as otherwise confirmed by the Operations Committee

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- vi. collating all Series Referee Reports (i.e. any sin bin or sending off) and Provincial Union Disciplinary Committee findings;
- vii. distributing all Referee Reports and Provincial Union Disciplinary Committee findings to applicable Unions;
- viii. advising all Unions of any breach of Series Eligibility Rules and reporting same to the Operations Committee, if applicable.

2. Judicial Procedures

- a. The following rules are to be followed in relation to Judicial Proceedings associated with Series matches.
 - i. All games are to be played under the judicial rules of the Manawatu Rugby Football Union (MRU), other than in Round 1, where the judicial rules of the hosting Provincial Union will apply. Should an offence be committed which requires a judicial hearing, it will be convened and heard by the relevant Provincial Union's Disciplinary Committee.
 - ii. It is the responsibility of MRU to notify the Team Manager of the visiting team, prior to the game, of local judicial procedures.
 - iii. If a player is sent off (i.e. receives a red card), then that player cannot play any other Series match until he has served the mandatory stand down period as prescribed in MRU's judicial procedures, or has come before the MRU's Disciplinary Committee.
 - iv. The Series Administrator will need to liaise with the Provincial Union Disciplinary/Judicial bodies so that any offences that require to be referred to the Disciplinary Committee can be dealt with quickly and with the minimum of fuss and effort.

3. Statement On Conditions Of Entry

- a. Provincial Unions will undertake that all participating players in the Series receive the following Conditions of Entry.

The Hurricanes YRC acknowledges that the playing of Rugby Union carries with it some risks of injury. Some of those are inherent in the nature of rugby as a contact sport.

There are some risk management actions that the Hurricanes YRC can manage such as the quality of refereeing, the standard of coaching, the education of players around correct technique, the standard of the grounds and information to players about physical preparation before taking the field.

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There are others that we do not control such as the laws of the game and the personal approach of players towards playing the game. Our vision is to oversee a game that everyone can play safely and to do everything we can to allow those who participate in our competitions and tournaments to be safe.

For your part, we understand that your Provincial Union has discussed these factors with you, and you agree to participate on this basis.

4. COVID & Community Rugby

- a. This Competition is a “Community Rugby event” as defined by New Zealand Rugby. The Council adopts New Zealand Rugby’s guidelines for this event as may be determined from time to time.
- b. In all other respects, participants will be required to comply with any other COVID or public health regulations (if in force) or other policies which may be determined by the Council as applicable for the duration of this event.

5. Proof of Age/Eligibility

- a. The following procedures are to be adhered to.
 - i. Team Managers are to ensure all players complete a Hurricanes YRC Player Registration Form. This form requires a photograph of the player, official source documents confirming age of the player and a declaration by the player and a Provincial Union representative confirming the accuracy of the information detailed on the form.
 - ii. This Player Registration Form is to be retained by the Team Manager and made available to the Series Administrator on request.
 - iii. Team Managers are to submit no later than two working days before the first Competition game a Hurricanes YRC Competition Declaration of Age Schedule detailing the full names of their players, birth date and NZRU Player ID number to the Series Administrator. The Schedule is signed by the Team Manager and a Provincial Union Official.
 - iv. Team Managers are to retain copies of the source document and be prepared to submit them to the Series Administrator. Suitable evidence of eligibility would be a Birth Certificate, Driver’s License, or Passport.
 - v. Should players not on the original schedule subsequently join a team, then the Team Manager is to forward an additional schedule detailing the full name of the player, birth date and the NZRU Player ID number to the Series Administrator before the player plays a match. This Schedule is to be signed by the Team Manager and a Provincial Union Official, or a representative authorised to take statutory declarations.

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- vi. Team Managers are to give a copy of the schedule confirming the age of their players to the opposing Team Manager prior to the commencement of their match.
 - vii. Penalty for Breaches. Any team that does not submit the required Schedules within the stated timeframes or plays an Ineligible Player will have all points deducted for matches in which they failed to produce a Schedule or played an ineligible player. In such cases the opposition are to be awarded five Series Ranking Points.
6. Medical Consent Forms
- a. Medical Consent for each player participating in the Series is the responsibility of that player's Provincial Union.
7. Team and Results Sheet
- a. A Hurricane YRC Team and Results Sheet must be submitted to the Referee at least 15 minutes prior to the commencement of each game. A duplicate copy is to be kept by the Team Manager, who at the end of the game is to fill in all the required details, get the Referee's signature and comments, then forward to the Series Administrator.
 - b. The Team Sheet must be received by the Series Administrator within 48 hours of the finish of all Series matches.
8. Costs
- a. All costs associated with each team such as transport, clothing, medical support, training venue hireage, playing equipment, training equipment and alike, are the responsibility of each team's Provincial Union.
 - b. The Hurricanes YRC will meet the following costs.
 - i. All venue-related costs (i.e., ground hire and changing room hire).
 - ii. A one-off travel subsidy of \$400 will be paid to all teams.
 - iii. In addition, Poverty Bay will be entitled to one night's accommodation (incl. an evening meal and breakfast) between the second and third round fixtures in Palmerston North.
 - iv. At the conclusion of Round 3 matches, a Series Function at the venue.
9. Balls
- a. Each team is asked to supply balls which conform to the Rules of the Game.

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- b. In the event that the fixture is played at a neutral venue above, the first named team in the Draw is responsible for providing the Match Balls.

10. Player of the Series

- a. The Player of the Series is to be determined via a 3, 2, 1 Player of the Day points system which is to be awarded for both teams in every match.
- b. The process to be followed is that after a match, each Team Management is to award 3 points to their player who was that team's best player, 2 points for the player they deem to be the second-best player and 1 point for the player they deem to be the third best player in that particular match.
- c. The Player of the Day points are to be annotated on the matches Hurricanes YRC Team and Results Sheet.
- d. It is the responsibility of the Series Administrator to then collate all the Player of the Day points for each team, in each match.
- e. The Player of the Series is to be that player who has the highest total player of the day points that are awarded for all round robin Series matches.
- f. In the event that two or more players have the same total Player of the Day points, then the award will be shared.

11. Protests/Appeals

- a. Should any Provincial Union wish to lodge a protest, then written details of the protest are to be forwarded to the Series Administrator.
- b. The Series Administrator within 24 hours of receipt of the protest is to forward all relevant documentation to the Hurricanes YRC Executive Committee for resolution.
- c. Any Appeal against a ruling made by the Hurricanes YRC Executive Committee is to be heard by an Appeals Committee formed by the Hurricanes YRC.
- d. The finding of the Hurricanes YRC Appeals Committee is final.

12. Penalties for Non-Compliance

- a. All events can only be efficiently conducted if all Provincial Unions meet their administrative obligations as detailed in the Hurricanes Rules of Procedure and the specific Annexes.
- b. In order to provide an incentive for Provincial Unions to meet these administrative obligations the following non-compliance rewards/penalties are to be applied:

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i. Accurate Provision of Pre-Competition Documentation:

All teams are to be awarded one (1) Series Ranking Point if all pre-Series administration is received by the Series Administrator within the stated/prescribed timeframes.

ii. Accurate Processing of Team/Result Sheets:

All teams who fail to provide accurately completed Hurricanes YRC Team/Result sheets within the stated/prescribed timeframes are NOT to receive any Series Ranking Points accrued during that match.

iii. Accurate Provision of Declaration of Age Schedule to Opposition Manager:

All teams who fail to provide an accurate Hurricanes YRC Declaration of Age Schedule to the opposition Team Manager prior to the commencement of a fixture as detailed in the Series Rules is NOT to receive any Series Ranking Points accrued during that match.

iv. Playing an Ineligible Player:

Any Team who are found to have played an Ineligible Player will lose any Series Ranking Points accrued during the match. In such cases the opposition teams is to be awarded five (5) points.

13. Selection Of Heartland Under 20 Central Region Shield Team

- a. The selection of the team will be made by the RDOs of each of the participating Provincial Unions, in consultation with the Council's Operations Committee.
- b. The Operations Committee will appoint the Coaching and Management staff of the team, in consultation with the participating Provincial Unions.
- c. The team will comprise 23 players and ideally be representative of each of the participating Provincial Unions.
- d. The team will be announced at function at the conclusion of the Series.

ENDS
