

THE WATFORD OBSERVER FOURTEEN14 2017 RULES

1. The competitions will be called the Watford Observer Fourteen14 Shield and Plate. They will be run by the Watford Observer sports desk.
2. The Watford Observer Fourteen14 is open to Saracens Herts League-registered clubs and/or CCC-registered clubs and/or teams representing secondary (or equivalent) schools based within the Watford Observer circulation area.
3. The entry fee is £40 (forty pounds) and to help cover costs and prize money.
4. The Shield and Plate will be run as knockout contests.
5. Teams without a recognized home ground are permitted to enter but they will be drawn away for every round of the competitions they reach prior to the semi-finals and final.
6. A seeding system will again operate in the Shield competition. This will be made up of the eight teams who contested the 2016 Shield quarter-finals, subject to their entries being received this year. If there is any shortfall, preference will be given to the highest ranking league club(s) who did not contest the 2016 Shield quarter-finals.
7. Only players registered to a participating club, and who play regular Saturday league cricket for that club, are permitted to take part in the Watford Observer Fourteen14. Players are not permitted to represent more than one club/team in the competitions.
8. With regard to school teams, players are permitted to be current and/or former pupils and/or current staff members. School teams are permitted to select players who play for Saracens Herts League clubs but they are not permitted to represent more than one club/team in the competitions.
9. Clubs/schools are required to submit a squad list of 18 players with their entry into the Watford Observer Fourteen14. Failure to do this will invalidate their entry. Clubs/schools entering more than one team must submit a separate squad list for each team. Players are not permitted to switch between those squads.
10. The updated 2010 Code of Cricket Laws will apply throughout the Shield and Plate competitions (inclusive of the updated laws effective from October 2013), with special reference to the Spirit of the Game, and direct control by the umpires of dangerous and unfair play. The umpires are also responsible for the correctness of the scores.
11. Clubs will be expected to provide their own qualified umpire, as specified in the updated 2010 Code of Cricket Laws, up to and including the quarter-final stage of the Shield and Plate, and a scorer for all rounds. For legal reasons the umpire should be a member of the ECB, ACO (England and Wales Cricket Board, Association of Cricket Officials) and have CRB (Criminal Records Bureau) cover. The sports desk will appoint umpires for the semi-final and final of the Shield and Plate.

12. Clubs/schools who do not have an ECB, ACO umpire are required to contact the Watford Observer sports desk at least five days prior to the date of a match. The competitions' umpire co-ordinator will appoint an umpire and a fee of £20 will be payable at the toss by the team who has requested an umpire.

13. Every team is required to hand a team sheet to the umpires at the toss prior to every game in the competitions. Failure to do this will be deemed as a forfeiture of the match and the game will be awarded to the opposition.

14. All matches in the Shield and Plate will start at 6.15pm, and any team not on the square by 6.30pm will forfeit the toss. Their opponents will be given the choice of batting or bowling first. The side batting first is expected to complete its innings in 75 minutes playing time (i.e. if the innings start at 6.15pm, it should be completed by 7.30pm). If this expectation is not met, the batting side still completes its innings after 14 overs but the fielding side will ONLY receive the number of overs that they bowled over 75 minutes. To prevent unnecessary time-wasting, the following will apply:

(a) Each innings will consist of 14, eight-ball overs, with a maximum of FOUR overs per bowler, and the nominated wicket keeper will not be allowed to bowl.

(b) Each bowler is limited to a 12-yard run-up, which should be marked.

(c) No subs or runners are permitted in the event of injury to a batsman. The batsman must retire.

(d) During the first 13 overs in each innings a "No Ball" or "Wide" called shall attract four penalty runs, with no extra ball bowled. This is in addition to any other runs which are scored and awarded.

(e) During the 14th and last over of an innings, a "No Ball" or "Wide" called will incur ONE penalty run, plus any legitimate runs made, AND an extra ball allowed.

15. If a game cannot start until later than 6.30pm, due to unforeseen events involving one or both teams, the umpires have the sole responsibility of shortening a game down to a minimum of ten, eight-ball overs per side, instead of the full 14, eight-ball overs, or cancelling the game and setting a new date, with the agreement of both captains. If a new date cannot be agreed upon the matter should be referred to the Watford Observer sportseditor.

16. Each team will provide one USED cricket ball for their own innings for each game. This ball must be of Saturday league regulation standard and be in good condition with a reasonable quality seam.

17. Each umpire is reminded that one-day cricket guidelines must be invoked, with particular reference to the awarding of "Wides" for leg-side bowling and no balls for short pitched deliveries and beamers as specified in the updated 2010 Code of Cricket Laws (inclusive of October 2013 changes). For a "Wide" to be awarded, the ball must be delivered on the outside of leg stump without coming into contact with the batsman's apparel or his bat and called a "Wide" when the ball passes the line of the wicket.

18. A 12-yard run-up must be clearly marked prior to the commencement of all matches in the competitions.

19. From and including the quarter-final stage of the Shield and Plate, a fielding circle will be introduced. This circle is to be indicated by the use of white discs, or similar, and will be placed 30 yards from each centre stump and joined parallel with the pitch. Throughout the game, a minimum of six members of the fielding team (including the bowler and wicket keeper) must be inside the circle when the ball is delivered. If not, the striker's end umpire will call and signal "No Ball".

20. A draw for the Shield will be made by the Watford Observer sports desk and published in the Watford Observer and on its website, together with advance notification of the dates for each round, providing weather conditions are stable. If not, dates could be changed.

A draw for the Plate will be made by the Watford Observer sports desk and published in the Watford Observer and on its website after the required numbers of rounds of the Shield have been completed.

Clubs drawn first will play at their recognised home ground. Teams may be asked to consider conceding home advantage to assist with the administration of the competitions.

21. The winning captain is responsible for the production of a completed scorecard, which must include the names of all of the winning team's players from the game and both umpires, along with the club they were representing. This must be handed into the Watford Observer offices within three days of the completion of the game or e-mailed to amatthews@london.newsquest.co.uk. This is compulsory and failure to do so will result in that team forfeiting the match and the game will be awarded to the opposition.

22. To allow clubs maximum flexibility in fulfilling their ties, matches should be played in a specified week(s), rather than on specific dates.

Upon receipt of the competition information pack, it is the responsibility of the HOME side to contact the away team and come to a mutual agreement on which date a game should be played. When this is decided, the HOME side should inform the Watford Observer sports desk.

Dates for the semi-finals and final are binding.

23. Clubs can only play on dates not in the specified week(s) in the following circumstances:

(a) As a result of postponement because of bad weather conditions or unforeseeable circumstances

(b) With the prior permission of the Watford Observer sports desk

Clubs failing to fulfil a fixture will forfeit the tie.

24. The winning team, when a game is abandoned for any reason, must be decided by the umpires. If any disagreement follows between the two teams, this must be referred to the Watford Observer sports editor, whose decision is final. A result cannot be declared unless the team batting second has completed half of its allotted overs.

25. The winner of a full-length game will be:

- i) The side scoring the most runs at the end of the scheduled playing time, or at any earlier time when the first innings total has been passed
- ii) In the event of both sides' run totals being equal at the end of the scheduled playing time, the side losing least wickets will be declared the winner
- iii) If the teams are still equal, the side scoring the most runs at the completion of the first half of its allotted overs will be declared the winner
- iv) If the scores still remain equal, the side losing the least number of wickets at the completion of the first half of its allotted overs will be declared the winner.

26. In the event of a game being abandoned where the team batting second has completed half of its allotted overs, the winner will be the side scoring the most runs at the equivalent stage of the match.

- i) If the scores still remain equal, the sides losing the least number of wickets at the equivalent stage of the match will be declared the winner.

27. Once an entry form, entry fee and the club's/school's squad list(s) is submitted to the Watford Observer sports desk, it is deemed that the club concerned accepts all the above rules for the Shield and Plate, and that the Watford Observer sports desk's decision is final for all aspects of the two competitions.

28. Any allegation of an infringement of the rules of the Watford Observer Fourteen14, or of misconduct against a club, player or official in a competitions match, must be reported within three days of the alleged offence to the Watford Observer sports editor, Anthony Matthews. Reports must be made in writing to Anthony Matthews by email at amatthews@london.newsquest.co.uk

Once an allegation is received, the sports editor will launch an immediate investigation into the allegation.

PLATE QUALIFICATION

The teams to qualify for the Plate will be the losers of the first round Shield ties. Any shortfall will be made up from the second round Shield ties based on worst net run rate.