

U16 Hampshire League 2026-27

How the Cup Competition Works - Cup, Plate, Bowl, Shield & Vase

The principle: nobody is just knocked out

Every team's league form feeds directly into the cup draw; every team keeps playing for something all the way to Finals Day. If you lose your Quarter-Final, you do not drop out of the competition - you cascade down to play for the next trophy instead. The only exception is the Vase: as this is the last trophy in the ladder, there is no cascade.

Step 1: Three pools, set by league form

After Round 5, all 21 teams are ranked together using average league points per game (the same fair, cross-division method used to build the league itself). That single ranking splits into three pools:

Pool	Who's in it	Plays for
Pool 1	Top 8 teams overall	Cup (QF winners) and Plate (QF losers)
Pool 2	Next 8 teams overall	Bowl (QF winners) and Shield (QF losers)
Pool 3	Bottom 5 teams overall	Vase only - standalone knockout

Step 2: How the cascade works

Take Pool 1, as the example, and the same logic will apply to Pool 2 as well. So ...

- All 8 teams in the pool play a seeded Quarter-Final on 17 January (Top seed vs lowest seed: 1v8, 2v7, 3v6, and 4v5).
- Win your Quarter-Final, and you are through to the Cup Semi-Final on 7 February.
- Lose your Quarter-Final, and you cascade down to the Plate Semi-Final on the same weekend - no extra fixture needed.
- Both the Cup and the Plate then run their own Semi-Final, with the final being played on Finals Day.

Pool 2 works identically, producing the Bowl (Quarter-Final winners) and the Shield (Quarter-Final losers).

Pool 3 (the lower 5 teams) is smaller, and the teams play for the Vase: the top 3 seeds are afforded a bye to the Semi-Final, and seeds 4 and 5 play a Quarter-Final for the last Semi-Final place.

Fair approach

- Your Quarter-Final opponent and your trophy are both set by how your team actually performed in the league, not by which division you happened to be drawn into.
- A single bad result in the Quarter-Final doesn't end your season - it moves you into a final you could still win.
- Every one of the 21 teams plays right through to a Semi-Final or better.

Key Dates

Stage	Date	What happens
Quarter-Finals	Sun 17 Jan 2027	All 21 teams play - this single weekend decides who's still in the top trophy of their pool and who cascades down
Semi-Finals	Sun 7 Feb 2027	Four teams left in each of the five competitions
Finals Day	Sun 28 Feb 2027	Cup, Plate, Bowl, Shield & Vase Finals - hosted by Romsey RFC

Finals Day

All five Finals - Cup, Plate, Bowl, Shield and Vase - are hosted by Romsey RFC on Sunday 28 February 2027.

Quick FAQ

Q: We lost our Quarter-Final - are we out?

No. You move into the Semi-Final of the next trophy down (Cup to Plate, or Bowl to Shield) on the same weekend.

Q: What if we are in Pool 3?

You will be playing for the Vase only – this is a smaller, standalone knockout competition, with byes for the top 3 seeds, given there is not a trophy below the Vase to cascade into.

Q: Can our Quarter-Final opponent come from a different division to us?

Yes - pools are set by overall league form across all four divisions, not by division.