



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

RFU TICKETS-GUIDANCE NOTES

The information in these notes is primarily to help administrators with regard to international match tickets.

The RFU has undertaken, and will continue to undertake, a policing operation which uncovers instances of black market activity. The steps taken include:

- purchasing tickets for unofficial hospitality and the inspection of tickets within hospitality venues;
- the use of test purchasing in the weeks before and on the day of internationals;
- monitoring eBay and other internet auction sites; and
- sound and video surveillance of the activities in and around Twickenham on match days.

If this policing operation uncovers a breach of the ticket conditions, the organisation that was allocated the ticket concerned will be asked for an explanation and the matter may be referred to the Ticket Sub-Committee, which is a sub-committee of the Board of Directors. The Ticket Sub-Committee will consider the facts of each case including the culpability of the organisation concerned and any other mitigating circumstances and decide on the appropriate sanction. Sanctions have been imposed which have resulted in the reduction for a period of time of all or part of a ticket allocation.

It has become apparent when considering individual cases that tickets have ended up on the black market because of errors, lack of knowledge and in particular because ticket holders have been let down by others (sometimes innocently).

A common reason why tickets end up on the black market is that someone is let down at the last minute and then sells the ticket near the stadium at face value or even gives the ticket away free of charge to avoid it going to waste to someone they believe is "a genuine fan". This apparently genuine fan however often turns out to be no more than a "runner" for a ticket tout. Many clubs are unaware of how the touts operate on match day. It is no longer just a man on the corner of the street asking if people want to buy or sell tickets. They use runners dressed in rugby shirts who look like genuine fans asking for just 1 or 2 spare tickets. These runners appear in pubs where rugby fans are known to congregate before the game, on the way to the stadium and even in the stadium car parks. In some cases, we have even seen runners enter the ground with the person who has given them a ticket only to return outside the ground to resell the ticket at a premium.

Faced with this type of problem, we set out below a number of steps which clubs can take to minimise tickets ending up on the black market. Whilst the ticket conditions impose an absolute liability on clubs (and others) to ensure that the tickets do not reach the black market, the steps a club itself takes to prevent this are always considered by the Ticket Sub-Committee.

It is recommended that all those who receive an allocation of tickets:

1. Keep a full record of to whom they are issued and retain those records for at least 12 months as they may well be asked for by the RFU.
2. Advise in writing all recipients of tickets that tickets are transferred subject to the RFU ticket terms and conditions (see the form of wording below).
3. Allocate tickets only to club members and sponsors and except for sponsors and other special circumstances, only allocate a single ticket or a pair of tickets to a member. In the event that you do allocate more than two tickets to a member ensure you are aware as to who will be using the tickets to attend the match.
4. Make the RFU ticket terms and conditions available on request and ensure that ticket recipients understand them.
5. Tell members that the tickets are for their personal use and should only be used by the member together with their family, friend or colleague and specifically warn members about not giving or selling spare tickets on match days to "genuine fans".

6. Consider asking the ticket recipients to sign a declaration confirming that the tickets are for their personal use only. This could form part of your ticket application form.
7. Warn members that if their tickets end up on the black market they will not be allowed to receive international tickets for a period of time and the club may be penalised by a loss of allocation. In addition, in particularly serious cases you may want to consider suspending the member from the club.
8. Make sure you are selling tickets to genuine club sponsors, that there is a proper agreement, that the sponsor is not a "restricted person" as defined by the ticket conditions and that the sponsorship agreement is not in effect a "ticket sale agreement". Please see the RFU precedent Sponsorship Agreement, which we advise is used by all clubs.
9. Ask members to retain the tickets they were allocated for a month after the match.

A synopsis of the Ticket Terms & Conditions is included with these notes and is intended to highlight some of the terms and conditions which apply to RFU tickets. All documents relating to the Terms and Conditions of Issue can be viewed on rfu.com/tickets/termsandconditions.aspx

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING TICKET RETURNS

The issue of clubs returning tickets late to the RFU Ticket Office has in the past two years given cause for concern, and the return of tickets close to a match increases the pressure with the resale of these tickets. At the RFU Council meeting on 15 April it was agreed that those clubs who fail to return their tickets by the set date, normally 3 weeks prior to the a match, will have their future allocation reduced by an equal amount and this reduction will be in place for 2 years and then reviewed for reinstatement.

If you have any query about the ticket conditions or as to what you can do with the tickets, you may seek advice from Patricia Murphy at the RFU (tickets@rfu.com). If you find out or suspect that any person to whom you have issued tickets has or may have parted with them, make immediate enquiries, tell the RFU immediately and if you are satisfied there has been any breach of the ticket conditions TAKE ACTION yourself.

It is suggested that on any ticket application form or when you send out tickets you use wording such as:

"All tickets ordered and supplied are subject to the RFU ticket terms and conditions a copy of which is available on request.

In particular, no member may sell or dispose of their tickets to anyone if they are not required for the member's personal use. They should be returned to (the Club, me). If you are allocated two (or more) tickets the Club may want to know who will be accompanying you or accompanied you to the game and request back the tickets after the match.

If any of the Club tickets are discovered on the black market the RFU may sanction the Club which may lead to a loss of allocation.

If you have any query as to what you are entitled to do with the ticket(s) issued to you please speak to Mr (name Tel No)."

Finally, please note that only the following Official Hospitality Providers are permitted to purchase RFU tickets from you:

1. Twickenham Experience Limited
2. Mike Burton Group Limited
3. Events International Limited
4. Eventmasters Limited
5. National Sporting Club Limited

6. Lucid Direct
7. Tiger Events Limited

The following is a non-exhaustive list of organisations that are **not authorised** to purchase the RFU's tickets:

1. Sportingclass
2. VU Limited
3. Pall Mall
4. Racing and Ball Hospitality Ltd
5. Watchfromabox.com
6. Galleria Box Office Ltd
7. 19th Hole events
8. Sportmans Choice Limited
9. UK Ticket Brokers
10. Event Co
11. Britannia Events
12. Grandslam Events
13. Twickenham Hospitality
14. 4 U Hospitality
15. Front Row Promotions
16. Winning Rugby.com
17. Paragon Sports Management
18. ATM Corporate Events
19. WF Entertainment
20. Ticketstosee.com
21. International Sport
22. No. 1 Events Ltd
23. Executive Club Sports Limited.

In addition, the RFU is aware of two individuals who have joined a number of clubs in order to get access to tickets and those tickets have found themselves on the black market. These are Mr Jim Eadie and Mr AJ Law.

As the official hospitality licensed operators can (with the RFU's consent) use sub-agents to sell packages, the simplest guide as to whether hospitality is official or not is often the facility in which it is being offered as each licensed operator is licensed to operate at a named facility.

The following lists show which facilities are official and which are unofficial under the new agreements. If you are in any doubt about whether a package you are being offered is official, please contact Twickenham Experience on 020 8744 9997 or email twickenhamexperience@rfu.com.

Official Hospitality Venues:

Within the grounds

1. Wakefield's
2. Obolensky's
3. St George's
4. Six Nation's Suite
5. South Stand Facilities (including The Rose Suite)
6. The Players' Lounge

Outside the grounds

1. Kneller Hall
2. The Orchard Enclosure
3. Chase Bridge
4. Cardinal Vaughan

5. Richmond College
6. Cole Court

Unofficial Hospitality Venues:

1. Twickenham Stoop
2. Syon House