

Army v Navy Rugby - Twickenham 2020 - Tiered Ticket Pricing & the Future of the Army v Navy Rugby Match

Following the 2019 Inter-Services Rugby Union match between the Army and The Royal Navy, the 'match Committee' made up of representatives from both Unions, the Rugby Football Union (RFU), the Metropolitan and Service Police convened to review the 2019 match. The process identified where there is a misalignment between service values and match behaviour and how to take steps to correct the misalignment. During that process they were made aware of several press comments from Richmond Council relating to incidents involving public disorder offences from individuals attending the match. Many of these comments were unsubstantiated, however, some of the comments have been validated, including individuals urinating in local resident's gardens. This is totally unacceptable behaviour and brings the reputation of the Army and The Royal Navy into the public domain in an unprecedented negative manner; such reputational risk is absolutely offensive to both unions.

The match Committee met with Richmond Council, following that meeting they were left in no doubt that unless significant improvements in behaviour were implemented for the 2020 match, the Council would seriously consider the future of the game, noting they have the authority over the issue or non-issue of the match licence and ground capacity at Twickenham Stadium. While you cannot always foresee these risks, it's important to take proactive steps to mitigate any negative fallout that could be triggered by association.

The match Committee have spent considerable time since that meeting working with Richmond Council, the RFU, the Metropolitan and Service Police taking proactive measures to mitigate any future negative fallout that could be triggered with the 2020 match. These include a significant increase in toilet facilities in relevant 'choke points' between the stadium, car parks and railway station. Additional crowd fencing along routes between the station and stadium reducing '*cut through roads in residential areas*' and the employment of 'fixed penalty' officers that have the power to issue instant fixed penalty notices to the public for anti-social behaviour. The most significant point however requested by the Council was for the match Committee to '**change the behaviour**' of those attending the game. In discussion with the RFU, the match Committee representing both unions have agreed to work to a 'tiered price structure', similar to all large attendance matches at Twickenham. The introduction of £35, £30 and £25 tickets is the result of this action.

The Army v Navy match has in recent years seen one price point for all allocated seats in the stadium, the tiered ticket pricing will allow individuals that pay a slightly higher price to have better value seats in the east and west stands. With the lower £25 ticket available for all 'upper tier' seating. For the 2020 game both the senior men's and women's games will be played in the stadium in succession. The match Committee believe this delivers excellent value for money compared with the majority of other games played at Twickenham. One incentive for the 2020 match is to encourage '**more families**' to attend the games. The intention is for these families to be able to select specific 'family only seating areas'. These areas will not allow the consumption of alcohol, there will also be family engagement areas that will be for use exclusively by families before and after the games.

Clearly all of the additional measures come at a considerable increase in cost to the match and a large proportion associated with the tiered pricing will be used to off-set these increased costs. The Army v Navy match Committee are committed to ensure the game provides 'value for money' for the large service crowd that attend the game. We ask for your understanding and support and realisation that unless these measures are implemented supporting the Richmond Council directive the future of the match, played at Twickenham this year for the 100th occasion is in serious jeopardy of being cancelled.

Primacy is the Army's reputational risk