

Newcastle Falcons Supporters Club Code Of Conduct

What we expect of every member of the Newcastle Falcons Supporters Club

Newcastle Falcons is a professional rugby club that came into existence, when the game of rugby union became an open game and clubs were allowed to pay their players for playing for them. The fledgling professional club was born from the old Gosforth Rugby Club, which could trace a long and successful history back to the old boys of Durham School, who originally founded the club.

The game of rugby union is based on a code of conduct which, in its basic form, stated that players should play hard but fairly and should, at all times, respect the integrity of the match officials. With this code at its core rugby union became known as 'The Gentleman's Game'.

In the game of rugby union in the 21st century this code still exists and people, brought up on soccer, marvel at the acceptance of every decision, made by the referee and his touch judges, without a tirade of abuse from the players. In fact when a captain wishes to speak with a match official he still uses the polite 'Sir' to gain the attention of the referee.

This code of behaviour has also been passed on to the spectators of the game and dictates how they behave while supporting their team. This all came about because the first watchers were, mainly, ex-players and so continued to adhere to this unwritten code. These 'alikedoos' (a reference to the fact that all they could do now was talk about the game) passed their code on to the next generation of watchers and as some people started watching the game, without playing it, it became necessary to ensure that this code is still followed today. The game may have changed out of all recognition in the past dozen or so years, but the rugby player's code is still in place.

It should also be noted that all clubs within the Premiership and/or affiliated to the RFU are required to comply with the RFU Code of Conduct. Consequently, clubs have a responsibility for the behaviour of their members, players, coaches and regular supporters. All those who are members of the Newcastle Falcons Supporters Club can assist Newcastle Falcons in fulfilling that responsibility.

Our members are encouraged to comply with, and remind others where appropriate, of the provisions of the Code of Conduct set out below.

1. Whereas fair comment and amusing banter may enhance the atmosphere of a game, no supporter should abuse, threaten or intimidate a referee, touch judge or other Match Official, whether on or off the field of play.
2. No supporter should use crude or abusive language or gestures towards any players, referees, touch judges or other Match Officials or spectators.
3. Children are welcomed to support Newcastle Falcons and are the future of the Club. Supporters should be aware of the likelihood of younger supporters around them at games and moderate their behaviour and language accordingly.

4. No supporter should do anything which is likely to intimidate, offend, insult, humiliate or discriminate against any other person on account of their religion, race, colour or national or ethnic origin (this must be remembered when on the wrong end of some comment from visiting supporters).
5. All supporters are encouraged to set an example for sportsmanship. For example - applaud good play by all, remain silent during penalty and conversion kicks by both teams, and applaud all players and officials off the pitch.
6. At away fixtures, supporters are requested to comply with the same principles with which they comply at home games. Remember, although we pay an entrance fee, we are both guests of the opposing club and representatives of Newcastle Falcons.
7. Supporters are requested to allow the players and coaching staff their privacy. This applies particularly to away games where supporters may find themselves on the same flight or in the same hotel as the team. You will find that the players and staff are far more approachable after the game than before when they are concentrating on their task.

Above all, we are all there to enjoy ourselves, support our team win, lose or draw, enjoy each others' company and that of the opposing team's supporters. It must be remembered that not everyone has seen the light and come round to the fact that there is only one team worth supporting and that is **NEWCASTLE FALCONS**.