

# FA National Pilot Project – Substitutions

## Guidance Note for FA, County FA's and Leagues

### Purpose

The purpose of this guidance note is to give the FA, CFA's and their sanctioned leagues clear direction on what is required of them in order for leagues to be part of this National Pilot Project- Substitutions. The note will cover the following;

- the background and rationale for IFAB giving permission for the pilot
- who can be involved
- the process of implementation
- the monitoring requirements

### Background and Rationale

The FA has been seeking more flexibility on substitutions in the amateur game in an effort to help increase participation in 11 v 11 competitions and submitted to The International Football Association Board (IFAB) the following proposed law modifications for boys u17 and u18 11v11 and men's open age 11v11;

*"A Club may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game use \_\_\_\_\_ (3,4,5,6,7) substitute players in any match in this Competition who may be selected from \_\_\_\_\_ (3,4,5,6,7) players."*

*"A player who has been substituted himself becomes a substitute and may replace a player at any time subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of the game."*

IFAB granted permission at their AGM on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2012, for the FA to modify, as part of a two-year pilot scheme, the laws regarding substitutions in recreational football in any age group provided that:

- (i) matches are solely for amateurs
- (ii) matches are not part of the most senior domestic competition

In making this decision IFAB was clear that it wanted to see evidence that the pilot has a positive impact on retaining and growing the number of players participating in the 11v11 game.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> April, 2012, the FA Council approved an amendment to Rule 10(G) of the Standard Code of Rules mirroring the dispensation that already exists in the Standard Code of Rules for Youth Competitions and reflecting the IFAB decision. This meeting also clarified which leagues would be eligible to be part of the National Pilot Project.

### Who can be involved in the Pilot?

Any FA or CFA sanctioned leagues or cup competitions operating u17 and u18 Youth 11v11 and any open age 11v11 leagues are eligible to be part of the pilot.

The exceptions to this are Leagues that operate within the National League System Steps 1 to 7 and all Leagues with supply leagues status- these will **not** be eligible. Although NLS leagues with divisions outside of step 1-7 can apply the rule to those divisions outside of the NLS. Any cup competition which involves teams within the NLS Steps 1-7 will not be eligible.

Counties wishing to incorporate the modifications into their 11v11 open age and u17/u18 County Cup Competitions may do so subject to not having teams entering who are within Steps 1-7 of the NLS.

NB Youth 11v11 Leagues up to u16, Girls and Women's 11 v11 Leagues, Disability 11v11 Leagues and Veterans 11v11 Leagues have had the option to implement these substitutions modifications for some years now.

### The Process for Implementation

The process for implementation by leagues is as follows;

- Leagues wishing to incorporate the modifications into their rules for the 2012/13 season must notify their clubs a minimum of 28 days before the League AGM. They must also notify their sanctioning CFA or FA at the same time.
- The rule changes to be inserted as 10G must be worded as per IFAB's agreement as follows:

*'A Club may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game use \_\_\_\_\_ (3,4,5,6,7) substitute players in any match in this Competition who may be selected from \_\_\_\_\_ (3,4,5,6,7) players.'* **(League to insert appropriate number)**

*"A player who has been substituted himself becomes a substitute and may replace a player at any time subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of the Game."*

- For youth leagues wishing to include this rule in their U17 and U18 divisions- this will simply mean amending the existing rule in 10G of the SCOR- Youth from u16 to u18.
- Leagues should be clear with their member clubs that the pilot is for season 2012/13 and 2013/14 only, after which the IFAB will review the decision.
- As per league rules there must be a majority vote at the League AGM to adopt the rule change. (See Standard Code Of Rules 20)
- The League should inform the County FA/FA whether the league has voted to incorporate the modified rules within 7 days of the AGM clearly

indicating the number of substitutes they have agreed. (This is important as the CFA/FA will be playing the key role in monitoring which leagues are involved in the pilot).

The process for implementation by the FA/CFA's is as follows;

- The FA/CFA's should maintain a clear record of the leagues that have adopted the rule changes and therefore become part of the pilot.
- Where CFA's wish to incorporate the rule changes in their own competitions they should do so in line with the rules of those competitions
- The CFA's should prepare and communicate a clear brief for their registered referees indicating which leagues are implementing the modified substitutions rules. This brief should also be shared with the leagues so they can reinforce the message with referees officiating in their competitions.
- The FA will provide each CFA with a match day substitution protocol that should be adopted by the referee during the game. This protocol should be sent by the CFA prior to the season commencing so that referees can become familiar with it

#### Monitoring Requirements

In making its decision to support the FA proposal IFAB made it clear that it expected strong evidence that modifying the rules around substitution's has a positive impact on retaining and growing the number of players in the 11v11 game. On this basis all participating leagues and their sanctioning authorities- FA/CFA's have a key role to play in providing regular and valid data which can be presented as a compelling argument for the retention of the rule change after the 2 year pilot ends.

#### League Monitoring Requirements

- Leagues that are part of the national pilot by virtue of adopting the rule changes must report the following figures to the nominated officer at the CFA/FA;
- Number of registered players and number of teams in the league at the end of season 2011/12.
- Number of registered players and number of teams in the league at the start of season 2012/13
- Number of registered players and number of teams in the league at 31/12/12
- Number of registered players and number of teams in the league at the end of season 2012/13
- Number of registered players and number of teams in the league at the start of season 2013/14
- Number of registered players and number of teams in the league at 31/12/13

- Number of registered players and number of teams in the league at the end of season 2013/14

#### CFA /FA Monitoring Requirements

- To nominate aFA/CFA officer with responsibility for monitoring the pilot project in the County.
- Maintain a database of all the leagues participating in the county, updating this database with the data they provide as above. (Pro Forma database attached)
- Work with a minimum of 1 participating league within the county to provide a more detailed analysis of the impact of the pilot on their player numbers. Specifically analysing the numbers of players used in matches and numbers of unused substitutes. Leagues that utilise the necessary functionality on Full Time will find this a straightforward task.
- To forward the collated pro forma database after each key data collection to Andrew Hailwood – National League Development Manager who will collate the National picture for presentation to IFAB.

#### Summary

The IFAB decision has afforded the FA, CFA's and Leagues an excellent opportunity to demonstrate that using repeat substitutions up to 5 from 5 can make a significant difference to retaining and growing the number of players in 11v11 male football 17+. To make the most of this opportunity and ensure the most compelling argument for retaining the rule change after the 2 year pilot it is important that all participating Leagues and CFA's apply this guidance.

For additional support and guidance on this issue please contact Andrew Hailwood or Steve Rooke at the FA on the following email addresses;

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