

## **RULES OF THE AFA ADULT MALE CUP COMPETITIONS SEASON 2020/21**

(Unless otherwise indicated the rules apply to all Adult Male Cup competitions)

Any changes to the Rules will be posted on the AFA website: [www.amateur-fa.com](http://www.amateur-fa.com)

### **1. Custody of Trophies**

- a) The President and Honorary Treasurer shall be the legal owners of all trophies in trust for the Amateur Football Alliance.
- b) The winning Club shall be responsible for the custody of the trophy. The Alliance will be responsible for the engraving. On or before 1st December in the year following, the trophy shall be returned in a presentable condition. Failure to return a trophy as directed, in time and condition, shall result in a fine (see Schedule of Fees and Fines herein referred to as the 'Schedule').
- c) Should a trophy be lost or damaged whilst in the custody of a Club, the Club shall forthwith report this to the Alliance and may have to refund to The Alliance the cost of replacement or complete repair. The Alliance may additionally impose such other penalty as per the Schedule.

### **2. Control of Cup Competitions**

- a) The entire control and management of the competitions shall be vested in the Council who will delegate authority to the Cup Committee.
- b) The Cup Committee shall have power to interpret any existing Rule and to alter or add to these Rules as they may from time to time deem expedient.
- c) Clubs infringing the Cup Rules shall be liable to a fine as may be determined by the Cup Committee from time to time and such other sanction as from time to time may be decided by Council.
- d) In all matters relating to or arising from an Alliance Cup Competition, not otherwise provided for in these Rules, an Appeal against a decision of the Cup Committee may be made by a Club to the AFA Council whose decision shall be final and binding and not subject to any further Appeal (see Rules of The Football Association).

### **3. Laws of the Game**

All matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board.

### **4. Eligible Clubs and Teams**

#### **a) Conditions of Entry:**

(i) It shall be a requirement of all Clubs wishing to compete that the Club and teams are in current affiliation with The Alliance and further that their entry be approved by the Cup Committee.

(ii) In all AFA Cup Competitions, it shall be the responsibility of Clubs to ensure their Team selection follows generally accepted principles (i.e. each club shall play its strongest team in the Senior Cup, its second strongest team in the Intermediate Cup and so on, subject to Rule 4(b), with movement throughout the Club of promoted and relegated Players based on playing strengths. A Team in default may be liable to immediate disqualification and/or exclusion from future competitions.

- b) The Cup Committee shall have power to reject the entry of any Team or to accept it and place the Team in what they deem is the appropriate competition for their strength. Teams being entered

into what is deemed to be the appropriate competition MAY NOT be moved more than one cup below their nominal level, but if playing strength dictates, may exceptionally be allowed in a lower competition.

- c) Based on the playing level of their League Competition, Clubs will normally be included in the cups listed below, subject to the decision of the Cup Committee in accordance with Rule 4(b) and be registered on Whole Game System with date of birth Teams not included in a League Competition may be included in a cup to be decided by the Cup Committee. Any Club playing an ineligible player will be fined in accordance with the Schedule.

(i) Senior Cup and County Divisional Senior Challenge Cups:  
1st teams of Clubs (excluding those in the probationary year).

(ii) Challenge Cup:

1<sup>st</sup> teams deemed not to be strong enough to compete in the Senior Cup

(iii) Intermediate Cup & County Divisional Intermediate Challenge Cups: 2nd teams of Clubs (but may include 1st teams, see Rule 4(b)).

(iv) Junior Challenge Cup:

3rd teams of Clubs (but may include 2nd teams, see Rule 4(b)).

(v) Minor Challenge Cup:

4th teams of Clubs (but may include 3rd teams, see Rule 4(b)).

(vi) Senior Novets Challenge Cup:

5th teams of Clubs (but may include 4th teams, see Rule 4(b)).

(vii) Intermediate Novets Challenge Cup:

6th teams of Clubs (but may include 5th teams, see Rule 4(b)).

(viii) Junior Novets Challenge Cup:

7th and lower teams of Clubs (but may include 6th teams, see Rule 4(b)).

(ix) Veterans' Challenge Cup:

Veterans XIs of any Club affiliated to The Alliance irrespective of the Club's Parent County, whose members must be over 40 years of age on 1st October in the season of the competition. Where a club enters more than one team in the competition, the Alliance must be advised prior to the start the competitions of the squads as there will be no movement allowed between the teams.

(x) W.E. Greenland Memorial Cup:

Between such teams as the Cup Committee may invite. To be played when the Cup Committee shall determine.

- d) No team shall be eligible for more than one Competition in any season, with the exceptions that an eligible Team may compete in both Full and County Divisional competitions listed in (c)(i) and (c) (ii) and the W.E. Greenland Memorial Cup listed in (c) (ix).
- e) Eligibility for the County Divisional Competitions shall be determined by ground location in addition to the requirements of Rule 4(a). In the event of there being fewer than eight entrants as result of implementation of this Rule, the Cup Committee shall have power to allot entrants to other County Divisions.
- f) When, as a result of misconduct, AFA Council decides as a punitive measure to exclude for a period of time a Club or Team from any or all AFA Competitions, it shall follow additionally that AFA-affiliated League Cup or other Cup Competitions shall exclude such Club or Team for the same duration, and shall include such provision in their Rules or Regulations.

## **5 Entry Fees and Dates**

- a) Entry for all Competitions closes on 31st May in each year, unless otherwise sanctioned by the Cup Committee.

b) i) The Entry Fees for all Competitions shall be as set out in the Schedule.

ii) All such fees shall be paid upon making application for entry.

## **6 Eligibility of Players**

a) Players must be *bona fide* members of the Clubs for whom they play for at least 14 days prior to the date originally arranged for the tie.

b) No player may represent more than one Club in any competition in the same season.

c) A Club shall keep a list of the players it registers and a record of the games in which they have played must be entered on the FA Full Time system to FA Whole Game System and FA Full Time System (where appropriate). Any Club failing to comply with the requirement shall be liable to a fine by the Cup Committee.

d) A player (including a substitute) who has played in any tie may not then, in the same season, except in the case of a goalkeeper in the first two rounds of any competition, appear in any subsequent tie which is of lesser ranking without the prior permission of the Cup Committee at least 3 working days before the date of the tie. No request will be considered if a player has played more than one-third of the matches, including cup matches, for a higher team in the same season. For the purpose of this rule the ranking of competitions shall be - from the most senior – Senior Cup and County Divisional Senior Challenge Cups, Challenge Cup, Intermediate Cup and County Divisional Intermediate Challenge Cups, Junior Challenge Cup, Minor Challenge Cup, Senior Novets Challenge Cup, Intermediate Novets Challenge Cup, Junior Novets Challenge Cup.

e) As per Rule 20(a)

f) No player under 16 years of age shall participate in any game.

g) No player shall play for a Club in a Cup tie having played for any other Club participating at FA steps 1-6 earlier in the season, irrespectively of whether they have had a contract with that Club.

## **7 Organisation of Competitions**

a) The Competition Proper shall commence when there are left a maximum of 64, 32, 16 and 8 Teams, depending upon the number of entries.

b) i) Depending upon the number of entries the Cup Committee shall determine a minimum number of Preliminary or Qualifying Rounds to precede the Competition Proper.

ii) In all Competitions the Draw shall be arranged so as to minimize the number of Rounds to be played.

c) The Cup Committee shall arrange the latest dates for playing each Round and all ties shall be played on these dates and at times so arranged unless by mutual consent of both teams and the Match Officials. The Cup Administrator shall be informed of any agreed change of date and/or time.

d) The precedence of AFA Cup competitions each with another is indicated in Rule 6(c). In the case of competitions of another County Association information on precedence must be sought from the AFA Office.

e) At the request of the League involved, should a Club with two or more players included in a League Representative Team, playing in a Saturday FA-sanctioned competition, permission may be given to bring forward, but not delay, AFA Cup Competition fixture(s).

f) Clubs shall be aware that requests for closed dates with Leagues will not apply to AFA Cup matches unless advance notice is given, and matches are brought forward.

## **8 The Draw and Provision for Abandoned Matches**

a) As soon as possible after the annual closure of entries, and thereafter, as soon as possible after the date of each Round, the Cup Committee shall draw the Teams in pairs, constituting the Cup Ties.

- b) Unless mutually arranged to the contrary and with the prior consent of the Cup Committee, the ties shall be staged on the ground of the first-drawn of each pair.
- c) Venues shall, except with the express permission of the Cup Committee, be confined to the registered grounds of the Clubs so drawn.
- d) The Home club shall ensure that their opponents and the Match Official(s) are in receipt of acknowledged details of ground location, means of access and, where appropriate, parking facilities, not less than six (6) days prior to the date arranged for the game.
- e) The Home Club shall welcome the visitors and match officials to the ground and show them the changing accommodation and pitch and confirm the hospitality venue. They shall act as hosts at all times whilst the visitors and match officials are at the ground and at the hospitality venue.
- f) When a tie has been abandoned before the completion of 90 minutes neither club being at fault, it shall be played as an original tie on the same ground within seven days. If extra time has not been commenced or if a match has been abandoned during extra time, neither Club being at fault, it shall be deemed a replay on the ground of the Club second-drawn within seven days. Matches abandoned through the fault of either or both the Clubs concerned shall be dealt with by the Cup Committee. The Cup Committee shall have power to determine that the score of the match at the time of abandonment shall be the result of the match, or to expel one or both teams from the competition.
- g) Kick-off times for all Cup ties shall be as below. The times may not be altered without mutual agreement by the Clubs, the match officials and the consent of the Cup Committee or the Cup Administrator. All ties, except the final, will be played at 2.00 pm, except in November, December and January when they will commence at 1.30 pm.
- h) In the event of a Team being unable to kick off 30 minutes or more after the scheduled kick-off time for a match, the appointed Referee shall be the sole arbiter as to whether there is sufficient time to play the match, depending on the prevailing conditions. If the match does not take place, the Cup Committee will determine the outcome.
- i) If a Team defaults such that a rearrangement of a tie is required on the same Ground, then the Club of the defaulting Team shall meet all the match expenses.

## **9 Provision for Postponements**

- a) The Referees' Appointments Officer must be advised immediately by the Home Club of any postponed game. Drawn or abandoned games must be advised similarly by noon on the Sunday following the fixture.
- b) When a tie is postponed through circumstances over which neither Club has control, it shall be rearranged for the nearest Saturday following except with the express permission of the Cup Committee to do otherwise.
- c) In the event of a Cup match being postponed, neither Team being at fault, Match Officials who travel to the venue shall receive the full match fee indicated in Rule 19(a). However, if a Team defaults to cause postponement, then its Club shall be responsible for reimbursing in full the match fee to any Match Officials travelling to the venue and the reasonable expenses of the non-defaulting club.
- d) In the event of inclement weather causing a pitch to be known to be unavailable for play, the Cup Committee shall have the power to decide an alternative venue where a Tie shall be played in order to avoid delaying the progress of the competition. The Cup Committee will subsequently determine and recommend to Council the allocation of costs in such circumstances.

## **10 Provision for Withdrawal from Competitions**

- a) Clubs wishing to withdraw a team from a competition must give at least 14 days' notice in writing to their opponents and to The Alliance. The withdrawn team may not play in any other competition under the jurisdiction of the Alliance on the date fixed for a match (including any date for a postponed match). Breach of this rule will result in the application of rule 4(b).

- b) Any Club entered into more than one AFA Cup Competition wishing to withdraw a team, will be required to withdraw the team entered in the lowest Cup as indicated in paragraph 6 (c)
- c) A Club withdrawing a Team from a competition and giving less than 14 days' notice shall be liable for any reasonable unavoidable expenses incurred by their opponents.
- d) A Club wishing to withdraw a Team after an abandoned game must give notice to their opponents immediately following the match and must then inform The Alliance in writing.
- e) A Team may be barred from entering for one or more of the following seasons if the Club fails to satisfy The Alliance as to the reason for withdrawal during the course of the competition.
- f) **Please note that the Cup Committee has decided that for the 2020-2021 season, should any team be unable to fulfil a fixture due to it having participants who have returned a positive Covid-19 test, given the current pandemic situation, the team will be deemed to have withdrawn from the relevant AFA Cup competition with no penalty.**

### **11 Team Colours and Match Balls**

- a) Teams must play in colours registered with The Alliance.
- b) When the colours to be worn by both Teams are similar, the Home Team shall change unless mutual arrangements are made to the contrary - except where matches are played on a neutral ground, when both Teams shall change into contrasting colours.  
It shall be a condition of entry to the Competitions below that in any match each Player and Substitute wears a uniquely-numbered shirt. Clubs unable to comply shall have their entry refused. Any breach of this condition in a match shall be subject to the provisions of Cup Rule 2(c). Referees may not prevent players from playing in shirts without numbers but should note the facts on their Report Card.  
No player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts.
- c) Each goalkeeper must wear colours that distinguish them from the other players, the Referee and the Assistant Referee.
- d) Team Captains are required to wear an identifying arm-band.
- e) The Home Team must provide at least two footballs that conform to the Laws of the Game.

### **12 Dimensions of the Field of Play**

- a) In all competitions: 100 - 130 yards x 60 - 100 yards.
- b) Goal nets and corner flags must be used in all competitions. Failure to comply will result in a fine.
- c) Notification of any appeal as to the unsuitability of a ground shall be intimated to the Referee prior to the commencement of the game, but shall additionally be forwarded to The Alliance, in writing, so as to be received within three days (Sunday included) of the date of the tie. The Referees' Appointments Officer shall be notified of the protest by noon on the Sunday following the game.

### **13 Fitness of Ground for Commencing Play**

- a) The appointed Referee or a local Referee approved by The Alliance Referees' Appointments Officer shall decide as to the fitness of a pitch for commencing play.
- b) The Home Club is required to take the initiative in determining from the appropriate Authority the fitness or otherwise for commencing play and is responsible for informing their opponents and the Match Official(s) at an early enough stage to prevent, if possible, unnecessary travel. This requirement applies whether or not the pitch is under the Club's jurisdiction.

c) Where some but not all pitches under the Home Club's jurisdiction and allocated to AFA Cup ties become unfit for play, the seniority indicated in Cup Rule 6(d) must be applied to determine which tie or ties are played on the remaining fit pitch or pitches.

d) Football Turf pitches (3G) are allowed in this Competition providing they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's Register of Football Turf pitches. A pitch must be tested (by a FIFA accredited test institute) every three years and the results passed to the FA. The FA will give a decision on the suitability for use and add the pitch to the Register. The home Club is also responsible for advising participants of footwear requirements when confirming match arrangements.

#### **14 Duration of Play**

a) The duration of the game shall be two equal periods of 45 minutes.

b) The half-time interval shall be 10 minutes, which may be altered only with the consent of the Referee.

c) Extra time shall be played in all matches where a result is not determined at full time, followed by kicks taken from the penalty mark to decide a winner.

Extra time shall normally be 15 minutes each way, but the Referee shall have discretion to reduce this time to a minimum of 10 minutes each way. If, in the opinion of the referee, conditions do not allow sufficient time for the minimum permitted period of extra time, then the match shall be decided by taking kicks from the penalty mark immediately after the end of normal time. A result must be achieved on the day.

#### **15 Provision for Substitutes and Temporary Dismissals**

a) A Team may use up to three substitute players from up to three nominated players at any time during a match, except to replace a player who has been suspended from the game by the Referee. A substitution can be made only when play has been stopped for any reason and the Referee has given permission.

b) Substitutes may be used in a roll-on, roll-off basis. Team sheets will be provided for all ties and must be handed, duly completed, to the match referee 20 minutes prior to the scheduled time for kick-off. Clubs must put the player's shirt number on a team sheet alongside the player's name. Failure to comply will result in a fine.

c) In all Cup Ties temporary dismissals (sin bins) will be imposed by Referees for all cautions for dissent in accordance with the guidelines issued under the FA Pilot scheme.

#### **16 Reporting Results**

a) Each Club must submit details of results in a format in accordance with the requirements set out on Cup Circulars emails and/or FA Full Time instructions, including Referee's name and marking which, if less than 60, must be justified by a written report to be submitted within 7 days of the date of the match, and any other information required by the Cup Committee, to arrive no later than the following Tuesday (deadline is 9pm) after the match. Clubs failing to do so shall be liable to be fined. The result reporting form can be found at [https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=kCXJRcbM-UaA\\_5\\_I2e3eOQpuu7ETFbRDi0LofCOpoGZUMjBJN1VYM0ZEQIVHUTMzTUZDUIRaTDIVUC4u](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=kCXJRcbM-UaA_5_I2e3eOQpuu7ETFbRDi0LofCOpoGZUMjBJN1VYM0ZEQIVHUTMzTUZDUIRaTDIVUC4u)

b) Each Club must submit match results by SMS text message to the FA Full-Time system, by 7.00pm on a Saturday, or within 2 hours of the completion of a match played on any other day. Clubs failing to do so shall be liable to be fined.

c) Fines levied for breaches of Rule 16(a) will be doubled if not paid within 14 days and in default of payment Clubs may be barred from the Competition in the season following.

#### **17 Provision for the Semi-Final and Final Tie**

a) The Cup Committee shall arrange grounds for the Semi-Final ties of the Senior Cup and the Final ties of all Competitions and shall have direct control of all the arrangements, receipts and disbursements in connection with these matches.

b) When the Winners and Runners-Up have been determined, The Alliance shall present the Cup, with a Club Memento, to the Winners and Medals to up to 14 participating Players of each Team.

c) A Player sent off the field of play for misconduct in a Cup Final shall not be presented with a medal for playing in that Final; neither shall any Player who wilfully refuses to attend the Presentation Ceremony to receive a medal be presented with such medal, nor, being the Captain, shall he be presented with the Cup or Club Memento, but it shall be received by his deputy. In all such cases the Cup Committee shall decide subsequently whether to make any award.

## **18 Appointment of Referees and Assistant Referees**

a) In all ties, Match Officials will be appointed by The Alliance. In the event of a Club being advised by The Alliance that it is not possible to make an appointment, it shall be the responsibility of the Home Club to provide a Referee. The provision of Assistant Referees shall be at the discretion of The Alliance. Should Assistant Referees be appointed, the Referee will be required to provide marks to the AFA for the Assistants.

b) In the event of the non-appearance of the appointed Referee or an Assistant Referee, the competing Teams may mutually agree upon substitute Officials and, provided the game is played to a finish, it shall rank as a cup-tie.

c) Match Officials are appointed until a tie is decided and will be required to officiate in either replays or postponed games unless otherwise directed by The Alliance.

d) The referee shall inform the AFA and/or league or competition directly responsible if unable to referee a team or teams for any reason.

e) The Home Club must provide refreshments to the match officials at half-time.  
The Home Club shall provide at least a cup of tea and a cake or biscuit without charge to the match officials at or near the match venue after the match.

f) Where 3 officials are appointed, if the match official is unable to continue the Assistant Referee designated AR1 on Full-Time takes over as the referee.

g) A 4th Official may be appointed and officiate if any of the three match officials is unable to continue. Unless specifically agreed prior to the start of the match, if the referee is unable to continue the 4th Official takes over as the referee.

## **19 Scale of Fees for Match Officials**

All competitions:

a) All fines and charges are payable forthwith and must be paid within 21 days of the date of the notification of the decision (see Schedule).

b) The home Club shall be responsible for the Fees of the Match Official, which must be paid immediately after the game. Should three Match officials be appointed, the Match Fees will be split equally between both Clubs.

c) In the event of a Cup match being postponed, Match Officials who have not been contactable and who travel to the venue shall receive the appropriate fee indicated in Rule 20 (a).

d) For all Final Ties played to determination; a Personal Memento will be presented to the Match Officials.

## **20 Protests**

a) All protests shall be made in writing or by email and addressed to the Cup Administrator to be received not later than four days from the date originally arranged for the match in question. Such protests shall

be accompanied by a deposit (see Schedule) which shall be forfeited if the protest is deemed unjustified. The Cup Committee Emergency Sub-Committee will initially consider any protest with a view to resolving the matter as soon as possible. The Club making the protest may choose to put their case, either in person or writing, to the Emergency Sub-Committee. This procedure does not preclude the option of an Appeal Board hearing.

b) Any protest relating to the ground or its appurtenances must comply with the provisions of Rule 13 and shall not be entertained by the Cup Committee unless this has been done.

c) The Chief Executive Officer may delegate the protest to the Cup Committee Emergency Sub-Committee for consideration. The Cup Committee may order any Club engaged in protest to pay such sum as may be necessary towards defraying the costs of the appeal.

**SCHEDULE OF FEES AND FINES  
2020-21  
OPEN AGE CUP COMPETITIONS**

<b>Fees</b>	<b>Relevant Rule</b>	<b>Amount (£)</b>
Entry fee	5 (b) (i)	23
Match Officials	19 (a)	
Referees		37
Assistant Referees		30

<b>Fines</b>			
<b>Schedule of Offences</b>	<b>Relevant Rule</b>	<b>Fine (£)</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> &amp; Subsequent Offence (£)</b>
Failure to return a trophy	1 (b)	Not less than 50, plus the cost of making presentable	
Clubs infringing Rules	2 (c)	Maximum 75	
Numbered shirts	11 (b)	25	
Failure to notify opponents or match officials of the match arrangements	8 (d)	<u>25</u>	
Causing a late kick off: 6-29 minutes	7 (c)	15	
30-60 minutes	7 (c)	30	
Failure to act as hosts	8 (e)	10	
Failure to notify Referees' Secretary of postponement	9 (a)	10	
Late withdrawal if less than 14 days' notice: 8-13 days	10 (a)	10	
1-7 days	10 (a)	15	
Late withdrawal on scheduled date of match	10 (a)	25 (plus expenses)	
Failure to provide 2 match balls	11 (e)	10	
Absence of goal nets or corner flags	12 (b)	10	



Failure to provide a completed team Sheet to the Referee 20 minutes before Kick-off	15(b)	10	
Failure to return Cup result	16(b)	20	