



**The Amateur Football Alliance
Rules of the Adult Male Cup Competitions 2023-24**



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A. Definitions and Interpretation

1. In these Rules:

AFA means the Amateur Football Alliance Limited, company no. 3957859.

AFA Board means the board of directors of the AFA for the time being constituted in accordance with the AFA's articles of association.

AFA Council means the Council of the AFA for the time being constituted in accordance with the AFA's articles of association and **Council Member(s)** shall be any person(s) for the time being appointed to and serving on the AFA Council in accordance with the AFA's articles of association.

Affiliated Association means an association which is either a County Association or an Other Football Association.

Appeal Board means a panel as established from time to time selected by the CEO comprising of three (3) Council Members whose purpose is to hear appeals made by Participants pursuant to the provisions of these Rules.

CEO means the person appointed from time to time to be the Chief Executive Officer of the AFA.

Chair means the chair of a Club and includes a joint, assistant, deputy or temporary Chair and any other person appointed to perform the duties of the Chair.

Club means a club for the time being in membership of the Competition.

Club Crest means the official Club emblem featured on a Club's playing strip which is the recognised symbol of the Club.

Competition means the AFA Challenge Cup Competitions held under the jurisdiction of these Rules and **Competitions** shall be construed accordingly.

Competition Match means any Match played or to be played under the jurisdiction of the Competition and **Competition Matches, Match** and **Matches** shall be construed accordingly.

Contract Player means any Player (other than a Player on a Scholarship) who is eligible to play under a written contract of employment with a Club.

County Association means an association which has been accorded the status of a County Association pursuant to the Rules of the FA.

Cup Committee means the Committee for the time constituted in accordance with these Rules, and **Cup Committee Member(s)** means any person(s) for the time being appointed to and serving on the Cup Committee.

electronic platform means any form of electronic or digital platform and includes website addresses, application technology, conference call facilities and any device, system, procedure, method or other facility whatsoever providing an electronic means of remote attendance at or participation in, or both attendance at and participation in, (a) meeting(s) as determined by the Cup Committee.

FIFA means the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* or any successor body.

FA means the Football Association Limited, company number 00077797.

Ground means (where the context demands):

- (a) the ground on which a Club's Teams plays its Competition Matches; or
- (b) a ground selected by the Cup Committee pursuant to Rules 11(d), 11(f) and 14(h), or
- (c) the ground(s) selected by the Cup Committee to host the Senior Semi-Finals and all Competition Finals,



and **Grounds** shall be construed accordingly.

IFAB shall mean the International Football Association Board or any successor body.

Law means any applicable law, statute, bye-law, regulation, order, rule of court or directive, or any requirement of any regulatory body entitled to regulate the affairs of the FA or Affiliated Association, or any delegated or subordinate legislation.

Laws of the Game means the laws of the game as settled and in force from time to time by IFAB.

Manager means the person at a Club responsible for selecting a Club Team and **Managers** shall be construed accordingly.

Multi-Team Club means a Club that has more than one (1) Team participating in the Competition in accordance with these Rules.

National Game means all aspects of football involving and affecting Participants in and at the level of step 1 of the National League System and below.

National League System means the competitions which interact with one another by way of promotion and relegation within those steps of the National Game pyramid as determined by the Council of the FA from time to time.

Non-Contract Player means any Player (other than a Player on a Scholarship) who is eligible to play for a Club but has not entered into a written contract of employment.

Officer means an individual who is appointed or elected (whether formally or not) as director, chair, secretary, Match/fixture secretary or representative and who, by reason of their appointment or election, is required to make day to day administrative decisions and **Officers** shall be construed accordingly.

Other Football Association means one or any of the following listed associations:

- (a) The AFA.
- (b) The Army Football Association.
- (c) The English Schools' Football Association.
- (d) The Independent Schools' Football Association.
- (e) The Royal Air Force Football Association.
- (f) The Royal Navy Football Association.
- (g) The University of Oxford Football Association.
- (h) The University of Cambridge Football Association.
- (i) The Women's Football Conference.

Parent Association means the Affiliated Association of which a Club, in membership of more than one Affiliated Association, was first a member.

Participant shall have the same meaning as set out in the Rules of the FA from time to time and where the context so permits, **Participants/participating/participated** shall be construed accordingly.

Player means any Contract Player, Non-Contract Player or other player who plays or who is eligible to play for a Club or is subject to any suspension from playing.

Player Registration System means the FA system used to register Players as determined by the FA from time to time.

Playing Season means the period between the date on which the first competitive fixture in the Competition is played each year until the date on which the last competitive fixture in the Competition is played.



President means the person elected from time to time by the AFA Council to be the President of the AFA.

Rules means these rules and **Rule** shall be interpreted accordingly.

Rules of the FA means the provisions for the regulation of football matters set by the FA as amended from time to time and any regulations, standing orders, decisions, rulings, findings, penalties, or orders of any nature made pursuant to those regulations.

Sanctioning Authority means, as the context demands, the FA, the AFA or any other Affiliated Association.

Schedule means the list of Fees, Payments and Fines relating to the Competitions, details of which are appended to these Rules.

Scholarship means a Scholarship as defined in Rules of the FA.

Secretary means the secretary of a Club and includes a joint, assistant, deputy or temporary secretary and any other person appointed to perform the duties of the secretary.

Spectator Marshalls means those individuals selected by a Team participating in a Final whose responsibilities are more particularly set out in Rule 22(d).

Team means a team affiliated to a Club, including where a Club provides more than one team in the Competition in accordance with these Rules and **Teams** shall be construed accordingly.

Team Official means any official, director, chair, secretary, Match/fixture secretary or representative (whether formally appointed or not) of a Team.

Team Sheet means a form provided by the Competition on which the names of the Players taking part in a Competition Match are listed and **Team Sheets** shall be construed accordingly.

WGS means the Whole Game System and the procedures for the operation thereof as determined by the FA from time to time.

Written or in writing means the representation or reproduction of words or symbols or other information in a visible form by any method or combination of methods, whether sent or supplied in electronic form or otherwise.

2. Unless stated otherwise, these Rules apply to all AFA Adult Male Cup Competitions. Any changes to these Rules will be posted on the AFA's website and communicated to participating Clubs as soon as reasonably practicable.
3. Unless stated otherwise, words and phrases used in the FA's Standard Code of Rules, the Rules of the FA or the AFA's articles of association, shall have the same meaning herein.
4. Unless stated otherwise, words denoting the singular number include the plural number and vice versa; words denoting or implying the masculine gender include the feminine gender and non-binary gender status; and words denoting persons include bodies corporate (however incorporated) and unincorporated, including unincorporated associations of persons and partnerships.
5. Subject to Rule 25(a) and following the removal by the Government of all COVID-19 related legal restrictions in England in February 2022, all COVID-19 related aspects of the previous versions of these Rules have been removed.

1. Custody of the Cups

- (a) The CEO and President shall be the legal owners of all Competition Cups in trust for the AFA. All Competition Cups shall remain the sole property of the AFA. No Competition Cup shall ever become the absolute property of any Club and, in the event of the AFA's dissolution, the Cups shall become the property of the donors.



- (b) The Cup Committee shall be responsible for the engraving of the Cups. When the winning Club has been ascertained (subject to Rule 6(r)), the AFA shall loan the Cup to that Club, who shall be responsible for its return to the AFA on or before the first day in February in the ensuing year in good order and condition with the Cup Committee reserving the right to request the return of the Cup at any time by giving seven (7) days' written notice. Any Club failing to return a Cup to the Cup Committee on time and in a presentable condition, shall be fined on a **daily** basis in accordance with the Schedule.
- (c) The following agreement shall be signed (and delivered to the Cup Committee) on behalf of the winners of each Cup Competition:

We (A) (name) and (B) (name), the Chairman and Secretary of [] FC (Limited), members of and representing the Club, having been declared winners of the AFA [TBC] Cup (Cup) for the season 202[] -202[*], and with the Cup having been loaned to us by the AFA, do hereby on behalf of the Club jointly and severally agree to return the Cup to the AFA Cup Committee on or before 1st February 202[*] in good order and condition, or within seven (7) days after such earlier date if directed in writing by the AFA. Should the Cup be lost, destroyed, or damaged by fire or any other cause whilst under our care or custody, we shall refund to the AFA the amount of its current insured value or the cost of thorough repair in addition to any other penalty which the Cup Committee may impose.*

- (d) If a Club ceases to exist after winning the Competition, the Cup will be immediately returned to the CEO at the following address:

The Amateur Football Alliance,
FAO: The CEO
Unit 3,
7 Wenlock Road
London N1 7SL

2. Control and Management of the Cup Competitions

- (a) The organisation, control and management of the Competitions and any rights associated with it of any nature shall be vested entirely and exclusively in the AFA Council who shall delegate their powers of organisation, control and management of the Competitions to the Cup Committee who shall be empowered to make decisions pertaining to the Competitions on the AFA Council's behalf.
- (b) Subject to the AFA Board's over-riding authority on decisions relating to financial or commercial matters that affect the AFA, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to exercise all powers of the AFA Council in relation to the management of the Competitions and to make decisions on all matters arising out of or in relation to the organisation, control and management of the Competitions (including decisions relating to the eligibility and qualification of Players) which shall be deemed decisions of the AFA Council and shall, subject to Rule 24, be final and binding on all Participants in relation to these and any other matters not specifically mentioned in these Rules.
- (c) Subject to the provisions of Rule 2(b), the Cup Committee shall be empowered to rename any Competition for reasons of sponsorship or other marketing initiatives.
- (d) The Cup Committee may decide to enable Cup Committee Members entitled to attend and participate in meetings to do so by simultaneous attendance and participation by means of an electronic platform(s). Cup Committee Members shall be counted in the quorum for, and entitled to vote at, the meeting in question, and that meeting shall be duly constituted and its proceedings valid if the chair of the Cup Committee is satisfied that adequate facilities are available throughout the meeting to ensure that Cup Committee Members attending the meeting who are not present together at the same place may:
- (i) participate in the business for which the meeting has been convened;
 - (ii) hear all Cup Committee members who speak at the meeting; and
 - (iii) be heard by all other Cup Committee members present at the meeting.

The Cup Committee shall be empowered to appoint a sub-committee to expedite decisions to ensure the smooth progress of the Competitions.



- (e) All Clubs participating in any way in the Competitions shall be bound by and comply with these Rules (and any rules or regulations issued pursuant to these Rules). If the Cup Committee should subsequently discover that any Rule has been breached or abused, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to:

 - (i) disqualify (a) Club(s) from further participation in the Competitions; or
 - (ii) order the Match(es) to be replayed; or
 - (iii) impose such other penalty as it may think fit without any protest having been laid by either Club or other Participant.
- (f) Any Club charged shall be given seven (7) days from the date of notification of the charge to reply. In its reply, the Club may:

 - (i) accept the charge and submit in writing a case of mitigation for consideration by the Cup Committee on the papers; or
 - (ii) accept the charge and notify that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Cup Committee; or
 - (iii) deny the charge and submit in writing supporting evidence for consideration by the Cup Committee on the papers; or
 - (iv) deny the charge and notify that it wishes to put its case of mitigation at a hearing before the Cup Committee.
- (g) Where the Club charged fails to respond within seven (7) days, the Cup Committee shall determine the charge in such manner and upon such evidence as it considers appropriate.
- (h) Where required, hearings shall take place as soon as reasonably practicable following receipt of the reply of the Club as more fully set out above. The Cup Committee will determine whether a charge can be determined based on written submissions alone or if an oral hearing is necessary. When considering its determination, the Cup Committee shall not be bound by any enactment or rule of Law relating to the admissibility of evidence in proceedings before a court of Law.
- (i) Having considered the reply of the Club (whether in writing or at a hearing), the Cup Committee shall make its decision and, if the charge is accepted or proven, decide on the appropriate penalty in accordance with the Schedule (and any mitigating/aggravating circumstances where applicable).
- (j) When setting any fine, the Cup Committee shall ensure the amount is proportional to the offence, considering any mitigating/aggravating circumstances.
- (k) Save for a decision that a Team is disqualified from a Competition, all decisions made by the Cup Committee are final and binding on all Participants and not subject to appeal.
- (l) If the Cup Committee determines to disqualify a Club from a Competition owing to a breach of these Rules, that Team's League shall exclude the Club/Team from participation in its own league and cup competitions for the same length of time.
- (m) The Cup Committee shall be empowered to meet to deal with any contingency which may arise or for which there is no provision in these Rules.
- (n) The Competition and each Participant is committed to promoting inclusivity and to eliminating all forms of discrimination and will abide and adhere to the FA Equality Policy and any legislative requirements (including those contained in the Equality Act 2010).
- (o) The Competition and each Participant will make every effort to promote equality by treating people fairly and with respect, by recognising that inequalities may exist, by taking steps to address them and by providing access and opportunities for all members of the community, irrespective of age, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, race, nationality, ethnic origin, colour, religion or belief, ability or disability or otherwise. Any alleged breach of the Equality Act 2010 legislation will be referred to the Sanctioning Authority for investigation.
- (p) Clubs must comply with the provisions of any initiatives of the FA which are adopted by the Cup Committee including, but not limited to, England Football Accredited and RESPECT programmes (a



copy of the latter is attached to these Rules). Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

- (q) All Participants shall abide by the FA's Regulations for Safeguarding Children and Regulations for Safeguarding Adults at Risk as determined by the FA from time to time.

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 and FIFA.

4. Eligible Clubs and Teams

- (a) The Competitions shall be competed for annually and are open to Clubs who are affiliated to, and sanctioned by, the AFA.
- (b) Any Club not affiliated to, or sanctioned by, the AFA who wishes to enter a Competition must have the prior written consent of their County Association and shall, if the Cup Committee requests in writing, provide written confirmation of the same. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (c) The Cup Committee may reject the application of any Club at its sole discretion.
- (d) Save for the (Over 40) Veterans Challenge Cup, the Competitions shall be open only to those Clubs who play their matches on Saturdays, although Matches in all Competitions may be played on other days with the agreement of both Teams, the Match Officials and the prior written consent of the Cup Committee.
- (e) A Club which ceases to exist, or which ceases to be entitled to play in the Competition for any reason whatsoever shall automatically cease to be able to participate in any Competition.
- (f) Any Club withdrawing from its League or who is disqualified from its league during the Playing Season shall not be eligible to continue to compete in the Competition unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Cup Committee.
- (g) All Clubs must be free of suspension from the FA or any other Sanctioning Authority at least six (6) days before the date fixed for the Match.
- (h) On entering the Competition, participating Clubs agree to (i) play in the Competition until their elimination and (ii) field their strongest Team(s) throughout the Competition. It is the Club's primary responsibility to ensure their Team selection follows generally accepted footballing principles and represents the full playing strength of the Club - i.e., any Multi-Team Club shall play its strongest Team in the Senior Cup, its second strongest Team in the Intermediate Cup and so on with the priority/ranking of Competitions being set out in Rule 6(n) with any movement of promoted and demoted Players throughout the Club based solely on their respective playing strengths and standards. Any Club found to be flouting this Rule may, in addition to being fined in accordance with the Schedule, be disqualified from the Competition.
- (i) The Competition in which each Team shall compete shall be determined by the Cup Committee who shall meet annually in August prior to the annual draw taking place to review the entries and thereafter place every Team in a Competition which it deems best reflects their playing strengths after considering the standard of football played within their respective leagues and, if necessary, after consultation with the Teams' league Officers.
- (j) Subject to the Cup Committee's determination in Rule 4(i), Teams will be included in the Competitions listed below:
 1. Senior Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 1st Teams of Clubs (excluding those Clubs in their probationary year).
 2. Middlesex/Essex Senior Cup: To be competed for by 1st Teams of Clubs (excluding those Clubs in their probationary year).



3. Surrey/Kent Senior Cup: To be competed for by 1st Teams of Clubs (excluding those Clubs in their probationary year).
 4. Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 1st Teams of Clubs deemed by the Cup Committee not to be strong enough to compete in the Senior Cup.
 5. Intermediate Cup: To be competed for by 2nd Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup or 1st Teams of Clubs who are considered by the Cup Committee to be of suitable standard.
 6. Middlesex/Essex Intermediate Cup: To be competed for by 2nd Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup or 1st Teams of Clubs who are considered by the Cup Committee to be of suitable standard.
 7. Junior Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 3rd Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 2nd Teams pursuant to Rule 4(i)).
 8. Minor Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 4th Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 3rd Teams pursuant to Rule 4(i)).
 9. Senior Novets Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 5th Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 4th Teams pursuant to Rule 4(i)).
 10. Intermediate Novets Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 6th (and below) Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 5th Teams pursuant to Rule 4(i)).
 11. Junior Novets Challenge Cup: To be competed for by 7th (and below) Teams of Clubs participating in the Senior Cup (but may include 6th Teams pursuant to Rule 4(i)).
 12. (Over 40) Veterans' Challenge Cup: To be competed for by Veterans Teams of any Club affiliated to a Sanctioning Authority whose Players must be over 40 years of age on or before 1st October in the current Playing Season of the Competition.
 13. W.E. Greenland Memorial Cup: To be competed for by such Teams as the Cup Committee may invite on a date and at Grounds as the Cup Committee shall decide at its sole discretion.
- (k) Where two (2) or more Teams from the same Club are eligible to participate in the same Competition, all Teams shall be permitted to compete, however no Player may play for more than one (1) Team in the same Competition in a Playing Season.
- (l) Apart from those Teams who are eligible to compete in the AFA Senior Cup and (one of) the Middlesex/Essex Senior or Surrey/Kent Senior Cup and in the Intermediate Cup and the Middlesex/Essex Intermediate, no Team shall be eligible to participate in more than one Competition in any Playing Season.
- (m) In addition to the provisions of Rules 4(a) and 4(b), eligibility for the Middlesex/Essex and Surrey/Kent Competitions shall be determined by the location of the Team's primary registered Ground.

5. Entry Fees and Dates

- (a) The deadline for entry for all Competitions shall close on the date set and notified to all Clubs by the Cup Committee in each year.
- (b) The Cup Committee may accept entries received after the date set out in 5(a), but, in such cases, may impose a fine upon the Club/Team making the late application in accordance with the Schedule.
- (c) The entry fees for all Competitions shall be as set out in the Schedule and shall accompany the entry application.

6. Eligibility of Players



- (a) Subject to Rules 6(b), 6(j) and 6(k), every Player must be a correctly registered playing member of the Team for whom he plays (and been registered as such by the Club on Full Time, WGS or such other Player Registration System determined by the FA and permitted by the League in which the Club participates) for at least seven (7) days prior to the date originally arranged for the Match.
- (b) In order to be eligible for the quarter-finals, semi-finals and/or Finals of any Competition, a Player must be a correctly registered playing member of the Team for whom he plays (and been registered as such by the Club on Full Time, WGS or such other Player Registration System determined by the FA and permitted by the League in which the Club participates) for at least twenty-eight (28) days prior to the date originally arranged for the quarter-finals, semi-finals and/or Finals of that Competition.
- (c) In the Vets Cup, as well as satisfying the eligibility requirements in Rules 6(A) and 6(B), Players must be over 40 years of age on or before 1st October in the current Playing Season of the Competition.
- (d) It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure that any Player registered to the Club has, where necessary, the required International Transfer Certificate. Clearance is required for any Player aged ten (10) and over crossing borders including Wales, Scotland and Ireland.
- (e) Provided they have been correctly transferred in accordance with the rules of the League in which they participate, an unused substitute who does not play in a Match is entitled to play for another Club in a Competition in the same Season.
- (f) Subject to the provisions of this Rule 6, no Player shall normally play for more than one (1) competing Club in the same Competition in the same Playing Season and, in the case of a postponed or replayed Match, subject to the provisions of Rule 6(g), only those Players qualified on the original date of the Match shall be eligible to participate.
- (g) All Players must have been eligible to play in the original Match in order to play in a Match which is replayed, postponed or ordered to be replayed. However, a Player who has been suspended according to the disciplinary procedures under the Rules of the FA may play in a Match which is replayed, postponed or ordered to be replayed **provided** the term of his suspension has expired.
- (h) Save for the Vets Cup (whose minimum age is set out in Rule 6(c)), a Player must have attained the age of 16 to participate in any Competition. If a Player is in full-time secondary education, priority must always be given to school and school organisation activities. The availability of children must always be cleared with their Head Teacher. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (i) Contract Players are not permitted to participate in any Competition except for those Players who are registered under Contract with the same Club who have a Team operating at steps 1 to 6 of the National League System.
- (j) Prior to the quarter-finals of any Competition, a Player who has played for a Team in an earlier round of a higher-ranked Competition, may not, in the same Playing Season, play for another Team in a subsequent round of a lower-ranked Competition (or, in the case of a Multi-Team Club, play for a lower Team in a subsequent round of the same Competition) without the prior written permission of the Cup Committee, which (i) **must** be obtained at least seven (7) days before the date of the Match; and (ii) may be withheld in their absolute discretion.
- (k) A Player who has played in an earlier round of a higher-ranked Competition for a Team is **not** permitted to play for another Team in the quarter-final, semi-final or Final of a lower-ranked Competition in the same Playing Season.
- (l) A Player (in the case of a Multi-Team Club) who has played for a higher Team in an earlier round of a Competition, is not permitted to play for a lower Team in the quarter-final, semi-final or Final of the same Competition in the same Playing Season.
- (m) The provisions of these Rules apply to Players who have been correctly transferred pursuant to the rules and regulations of the League in which they participate but do **not** apply to unused substitutes.



- (n) For the purpose of these Rules, the order of precedence/priority/ranking of Competitions is as follows:-
1. AFA Senior Challenge Cup and County Divisional Senior Challenge Cups.
 2. AFA Challenge Cup.
 3. AFA Intermediate Challenge Cup and County Divisional Intermediate Challenge Cups.
 4. AFA Junior Challenge Cup.
 5. AFA Minor Challenge Cup.
 6. AFA Senior Novets Challenge Cup.
 7. AFA Intermediate Novets Challenge Cup.
 8. AFA Junior Novets Challenge Cup.
 9. AFA Vets Challenge Cup.
- (o) A Team must keep a list of the Players it registers and a record of all Matches in which those Players have participated on WGS/the FA's Full-Time system/or such other Player Registration System determined by the FA and permitted by the league and shall produce such records upon demand by the Cup Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (p) Any Club/Team who repeatedly fails to comply with the provisions of Rule 6(o) (or who, when requested, fails to provide a satisfactory written explanation to the Cup Committee for their non-compliance) shall, if the Cup Committee determines this action is justified in the circumstances (and subject to Rule 24), be disqualified from the Competition. For the avoidance of doubt, it is not necessary that the breach of this Rule be brought to the Cup Committee's attention by another competing Team or Club.
- (q) If the Cup Committee has any doubt as to the eligibility/qualification of any Player taking part in the Competition, it is empowered to call upon the Club to prove that they are eligible/qualified according to these Rules.
- (r) Failing a satisfactory written explanation being provided to the Cup Committee by the Team concerned, the Cup Committee is entitled to:
- (i) fine the Team in accordance with the Schedule; and/or
 - (ii) disqualify the Player and/or Team from the Competition and/or
 - (iii) impose such further penalty as it thinks fit.
- (s) In addition, the Cup Committee shall have a discretion (but not an obligation and it shall not go back more than one round) in exceptional circumstances to reinstate the beaten opponents or award a bye to the Team they were due to meet in the following round.
- (t) In the event of a Team being disqualified from a Competition after winning the Final, the Cup Committee is empowered to award the Cup to the runners-up and have the Player commemorative souvenirs sent to the runners-up. The cost of any replacement Player commemorative souvenirs, together with the postal, packaging and/or courier costs, shall be met by the defaulting Team. The Cup Committee is also empowered to request the return of Player commemorative souvenirs for the runners-up if they are subsequently disqualified from the Competition.

7. Organisation of Competitions (Drawing and Playing of Matches)

- (a) The Clubs competing in each round of the Competitions shall be drawn in pairs (and the Cup Committee may conduct draws for more than one round of the Competition at the same time). In each Match, the first drawn Team is referred to in these Rules as the "**Home Team**" and the second drawn Team as the "**Away Team**". The pairs shall play a Match subject to the Laws of the Game in accordance with Rule 3. The winners will compete in the next round, the Matches of which will be drawn in the same manner. This shall be continued until the Finals of the Competitions.
- (b) All Competitions shall be played on a knock-out basis unless otherwise agreed by the Cup Committee. At the sole discretion of the Cup Committee, early rounds of a Competition may be played on a league and/or geographical basis rather than a knock-out basis. Should a Competition



not be played on a knock-out basis, Clubs will be issued with appropriate instructions as to the format and rules of that Competition.

- (c) The Cup Committee, at its sole discretion, may grant exemptions (“**byes**”) to Teams in the early rounds. In the event of any Team(s) receiving a bye, priority shall firstly be given to the previous Playing Season’s finalists and semi-finalists and thereafter to such other Teams as the Cup Committee shall decide at its sole discretion.
- (d) After the draw for each round is made, notice shall be given to each Home Team of the name of the Away Team, and the date and time when the Match shall be played. All Matches in each round shall be played on such date as the Cup Committee shall determine. A Match may only be played after the date determined by the Cup Committee with the prior written consent of the Cup Committee (which may be withheld at its sole discretion).
- (e) All draws shall be published on the AFA website www.amateur-fa.com and confirmation will be sent via email to the designated Team Officials utilising the FA Full Time system (or such other Match notification system determined by the FA). Any Club who has entered a Competition but has not received electronic confirmation of their Match **must immediately contact the Cup Committee at info@amateur-fa.com**.
- (f) If a Team who has entered a Competition under the provisions of Rule 4(b) has a clash of dates with its Parent Association’s cup competition, the Cup Committee must be notified in writing immediately as cup matches sanctioned by and under the jurisdiction of the Parent Association normally take precedence over Competition Matches.
- (g) Save for the Senior Semi-Finals and all Competition Finals (which will be played at Grounds selected by the Cup Committee), the Home Team shall have the choice of Ground unless mutually agreed between the Teams and with the prior written consent of (i) the Cup Committee and (ii) the Referees Appointments Officer.
- (h) If the Home Team requests that the Match be switched to their opponents’ Ground (or a Ground at which they do not normally play), the Home Team shall remain responsible for all Match day expenses including Ground hire, Match Officials’ fees and post-Match hospitality.
- (i) Should any Team have three (3) or more Players selected for an Affiliated Association/League Representative squad playing in a competition sanctioned by the FA on a Saturday which clashes with the date of a Match, then permission may be granted by the Cup Committee to bring forward, but not delay, the date of that Match.
- (j) Requests for closed dates with Clubs’ leagues will not apply to Competition Matches **unless**:
 - (i) a written request for a closed date to apply to a Competition Match is made to the Cup Committee at least five (5) weeks before the scheduled date of the Competition Match; and
 - (ii) the date of the Competition Match is brought forward.Any Team whose Competition Match is brought forward under this Rule must also notify its league’s match/fixture secretary of the same.
- (k) The provisions of Rule 7(j) shall **not** apply to: (i) the Senior Semi Finals (Rule 21) or (ii) all Competition Finals (Rule 22).
- (l) The Home Team must, **at least six (6) days prior to the date** of the Match, contact their Away Team and the Match Officials by phone or email (**contact via SMS/text messaging/social media/relying solely on the FA Full Time system is not acceptable or permitted**) and ensure the Away Team and the Match Officials are in confirmed receipt of full details of:
 - (i) the Ground’s location.
 - (ii) means of access to the Ground (and any bespoke parking arrangements that may be in place).
 - (iii) any time constraints which may affect the kick off or duration of the Match.
 - (iv) the Team colours (if there is or appears to be in the opinion of the Match Officials, a clash of colours, the **Home Team shall change colours** pursuant to Rule 13(b).



- (v) the location for post-Match hospitality.
- (vi) any other relevant details.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine for the Home Team in accordance with the Schedule.

- (m) In the event of the Away Team or Match Officials not being notified at least three (3) days before the date of the Match, it is their responsibility to (i) ascertain the details; and (ii) report the lack of provision of the Match details by the Home Team to appointments@amateur-fa.com.
- (n) Artificial Football (3G) Pitches are allowed in the Competitions providing they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's Register of 3G (Third Generation) Football Turf Pitches. To meet the criteria, a 3G pitch must pass a test every three (3) years as defined in the FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf. If requested, a Team shall be required to provide written confirmation of the same to the Cup Committee. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (o) If a Match is taking place on a 3G pitch, the Home Team must advise the Away Team and Match Officials of footwear requirements and any limitations or recommendations regarding the type of boot or stud that may be used on the surface as well as any time constraints which may affect the duration of the Match when confirming the Match arrangements in accordance with Rule 7(I). Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (p) The Home Team shall welcome the Away Team and Match Officials to the Ground and show them the location of the changing accommodation and the Ground and (re)confirm the location of the post-Match hospitality venue. The Home Team shall act as hosts whilst the Away Team and Match Officials are at the Ground and the post-Match hospitality venue.
- (q) The Home Team shall provide separate and adequate dressing rooms, washing and toilet facilities for the Away Team and Match Officials. It shall also be the sole responsibility of the Home Team to ensure that the dressing rooms for the Away Team and Match Officials are securely locked for the duration of the Match. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

8. Kick-off Times

- (a) All Matches, except the Senior Semi Finals and all Competition Finals, will be played at 1.30pm. This time may not be altered without the agreement of the Clubs, the Match Officials and the Cup Committee (no Match shall start before 10.30am). Should there be a dispute over the kick-off time; the Cup Committee shall be the sole arbiter. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) In the event of a Team being unable to kick off thirty (30) minutes or more after the scheduled kick-off time for a Match, the 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 due to insufficient time being available, the Cup Committee will take such action as it deems appropriate, which may include:
 - (i) a fine in accordance with the Schedule; and/or
 - (ii) disqualifying the defaulting Team from the Competition; and/or
 - (iii) ordering the defaulting Team to pay the reasonable expenses of its opposition and the Match fee together with the reasonable travelling expenses of the Match Officials.

9. Technical Areas

- (a) When a Match is played at a Ground where there are benches provided and technical areas marked out, the number of Players and Team officials in the technical area must not exceed eight (8) per Team unless the Team bench facility provides more than eight (8) individual seats. Only named substitute Players, managers, coaching and medical staff shall be permitted in the technical area. No person under sixteen (16) years of age shall be permitted in the technical area. Participants are to remain in the technical area except for substitutes warming up and medical staff entering the field



of play when permitted by the referee. Any misconduct by a Club's Coach/Manager/Players and any other Participants in the technical area will be reported by the referee.

- (b) The occupants of the technical area must always behave in a responsible manner. Misconduct by Participants in the technical area will be reported by the Referee. Except for the Manager/Team coach and any substitute Players who are warming up or warming down, all other Participants must remain in the technical area/seated on the bench.
- (c) When a Match is played at a Ground where dug-outs are not provided and a technical area not marked out, the Manager/Team coach may convey tactical instructions to Players during the match, however they must always conduct themselves in a responsible manner (bearing in mind the provisions of Rule 12).
- (d) In Matches where assistant referees are appointed, or when instructed by the Cup Committee, the Home Team **must** provide barriers or roping to ensure there is no encroaching on the field of play or the impeding of the assistant referees. Fluorescent tape is not considered a satisfactory replacement for rope and all posts or stakes used must be of material considered satisfactory for Players' safety. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

10. Shortfall

In accordance with the Laws of the Game, the minimum number of Players that will constitute a Team for a Competition Match is seven (7). In the event of a Team starting a Match with fewer than nine (9) Players, the Referee must report this shortfall and the Team may be fined in accordance with the Schedule.

11. Provisions for Hospitality and First Aid

- (a) The Home Team must provide water, tea/coffee or fruit squash at half-time for the Match Officials and suitable food and refreshments for all Players and Match Officials after the Match to a standard equivalent to a home match in their own league. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) The Away Team must stay and accept the post-Match hospitality provided by the Home Team. If a minimum of seven (7) players from the Away Team fail to return to the Home Team's clubhouse or notified venue to accept the post-Match hospitality, then the Away Team will, in addition to being liable to a fine in accordance with the Schedule, be required to reimburse the Home Team for their reasonable hospitality costs. Any disputes on the reasonable costs will be subject to determination by the Cup Committee whose decision shall be final and binding on both Teams.
- (c) Any Team who consistently refuses to provide/accept post-Match hospitality to/from its opposition without providing a satisfactory explanation to the Cup Committee shall be dealt with in such manner as the Cup Committee deems appropriate.
- (d) The Home Team is responsible for supplying a First Aid Kit which meets current FA guidelines and shall ensure the Away Team and the Match Officials are aware of the nearest Accident & Emergency Department.

12. General Behaviour

- (a) All Teams entering the Competitions are reminded they are responsible for the behaviour of their Players, Officials, members, supporters and any Participant carrying out a function at a Match on their behalf.
- (b) Any Participant whose conduct:
 - (i) is found not to be in keeping with the AFA's values of fun, fair play, friendship and respect to the Competition and every Participant alike; and/or
 - (ii) is found to be not to be in the best interests of the game; and/or
 - (iii) is found to be improper or found to have brought the game into disrepute; and/or
 - (iv) uses one, or a combination of, violent conduct, serious foul play, threatening, abusive, indecent or insulting words or behaviour,



shall be dealt with at the sole discretion of the Cup Committee and may, if the Cup Committee deem it appropriate after taking all circumstances into consideration, in addition to a fine in accordance with the Schedule (and subject to Rule 24), be disqualified from the Competition.

13. Team Colours and Match Balls

- (a) Teams must play in colours registered with their Sanctioning Authority prior to the commencement of the Playing Season. Any Team wishing to change its colours during the Playing Season must obtain written permission from its Sanctioning Authority.
- (b) If, in the opinion of the Match Officials on the day of the Match, the two Teams have the same or similar colours, the **Home Team shall change colours** unless mutual arrangements are made to the contrary. Should a Team delay the scheduled time of kick off for a Competition Match by not having a change of colours it may be fined in accordance with the Schedule.
- (c) With regard to:
 - (i) a Match being played on a neutral Ground; or
 - (ii) the Senior Semi Finals; or
 - (iii) all Competition Finals,

the Team drawn first shall have the choice of colours. If, in the opinion of the Cup Committee, the two Teams have the same or similar colours, **the Team drawn second shall change colours** unless mutual arrangements are made to the contrary.

- (d) Players' shirts must be uniquely numbered, and the numbers must correspond exactly with a complete, legible and accurate Team Sheet which must be handed to the referee at least twenty (20) minutes before the Match. Referees may not prevent Players from playing in shirts without numbers but should note the facts on their report card. Any Team not having uniquely numbered shirts or who alters its selection or numbering after the Team Sheet has been provided to the Referee without providing the notification required in 13(e) may be liable to a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (e) A Player who is named on the Team Sheet may be replaced if he is injured warming up after the Team Sheet has been handed to the Referee **provided** the alteration:
 - (i) has been notified to the Referee; and
 - (ii) has been legibly made on the Team Sheet before the commencement of the Match.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

- (f) There must be no change of numbers during the Match except on a change of goalkeeper or where a Player has been instructed by the Referee to change his shirt due to a blood injury. Teams failing to comply with this Rule shall be reported by the Referee and are liable to be fined in accordance with the Schedule.
- (g) No Player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (h) Goalkeepers must wear colours that distinguish them from the other Players and the Match Officials. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (i) The captain of each Team shall wear a distinguishing armband to indicate his status and has a responsibility to offer support to the Match Officials in the on-field discipline of their Players. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (j) Advertising which complies with current FA Regulations may be worn on Players' clothing.
- (k) The Home Team must provide to the Referee for his approval prior to kick-off of the Match at least two (2) size 5 footballs that conform to the Laws of the Game. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.



14. Provisions for Substitutes and Temporary Dismissals

- (a) A Team may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game nominate and use up to three (3) substitutes at any time in a Match, except to replace a player who has been suspended from the game by the Referee after play has commenced.
- (b) A Player who has been substituted during a match himself becomes a substitute and may, in turn, replace another player at any time subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of the Game.
- (c) The names of the substitutes must be listed on the Team Sheet handed to the Referee at least twenty (20) minutes prior to the scheduled kick-off time. Any Player or substitute not named on the Team Sheet shall not be allowed to participate in the Match.
- (d) A substitution can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the Referee has given permission. Prior to the substitution being made the Club must identify to the Referee/Match Officials the number of the Player out and the Player in, in accordance with the Team Sheet.
- (e) A Player who has been named as a substitute before the start of the Match but does not actually play in that Match shall not be considered to have been a Player in that Match within the meaning of Rules 6(j) and 6(k) of this Competition.
- (f) In all Matches, temporary dismissals (*Sin Bins*) will be used by referees for all cautions for dissent in accordance with the modification by IFAB to Law 5 of the Laws of the Game.

15. Duration of Play

- (a) The duration of each Match shall be ninety (90) minutes consisting of two (2) equal halves of forty-five (45) minutes. The half time interval shall be ten (10) minutes, which may only be altered with the Referee's consent. The interval before the commencement of extra time shall be five (5) minutes, which may only be altered with the Referee's consent.
- (b) The Referee shall allow for time wasted or lost through accident or other cause. The Referee is the sole judge of allowance of time and his decision on this matter shall be final and not subject to appeal or protest.
- (c) If the score is level at the end of normal time (plus any additional time allowed by the Referee for time lost or wasted by accident or other cause), then extra time of thirty (30) minutes (fifteen (15) minutes each half plus any additional time allowed by the Referee for time lost or wasted by accident or other cause) shall be played. If the score is level at the end of extra time, the winner shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the procedure adopted by the International Football Association Board.
- (d) The Referee is entitled to reduce normal time to sixty (60) minutes, extra time to twenty (20) minutes or to dispense with extra-time and go straight to penalties if the prevailing conditions (which includes the allotted time for the hire arrangement of the Ground) make this necessary to obtain a decision. In this case, the Referee shall decide by the end of full time and prior to the commencement of extra time and shall notify both Teams of the same. All Matches in the Competition must be concluded at the first meeting.

16. Provisions for Postponed and Abandoned Matches

- (a) If a Match is postponed for any reason, the Home Team must inform the Away Team, the Match Officials, the Cup Committee and Referees' Appointment Officer without delay. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) In the event of a Match being postponed it shall normally be re-arranged for the following Saturday unless the Cup Committee decides at its sole discretion that an alternative date is appropriate and beneficial to the progress and running of the Competition.



- (c) In the event of a Match being postponed on one (1) or more occasions due to circumstances over which neither Team has control, both Teams must have an alternative Ground available in case a change of Ground is required.
- (d) If a Match is postponed on one (1) or more occasions due to circumstances over which neither Team has control, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to switch the venue, either to
- (i) another Ground supplied by the Home Team; or
 - (ii) the Away Team's Ground; or
 - (iii) a neutral Ground,
- if the Cup Committee considers, at its sole discretion, that such action is appropriate and beneficial to the progress and running of the Competition.
- (e) Subject to the consent of the Referees' Appointment Officer, if a Match in any Competition is switched to the Ground of the Away Team by mutual consent, the fixture shall be reversed – i.e., the Away Team becomes the Home Team and bears the cost of the Ground hire, Match Officials' fees and post-Match hospitality. Kick off times may be delayed to enable last minute switches on the day of a Match.
- (f) The Cup Committee shall be empowered to determine whether a Ground and/or the Ground's facilities are suitable for Matches in the Competition and, if a Ground and/its facilities are deemed to be unsuitable, to order the Team concerned to play its Matches at an alternative/neutral Ground. In the event of this happening, the cost of the Match shall be met by the Team so directed.
- (g) In the event of a Match being postponed due to circumstances over which neither Team has control, the Match Officials, if present, shall be entitled to the full Match fee (together with their reasonable travelling expenses) if they attend the Ground. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (h) Where a Match is postponed owing to one Team being in default, the defaulting Team shall pay the Match Officials the full Match fee (together with their reasonable travelling expenses) if they attend the Ground together with the reasonable hospitality expenses of the non-defaulting Team (subject to production of appropriate corroborating documentary evidence). Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (i) When a Match has been abandoned before the completion of ninety (90) minutes due to circumstances over which neither Team has control, it shall be re-arranged for the following Saturday at the same Ground unless the Cup Committee decides to choose an alternative date at its sole discretion.
- (j) The Cup Committee shall review all Matches abandoned in cases where it is consequent upon the conduct of either or both Teams. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition and does no injustice to either Team, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand. In cases where the Cup Committee is satisfied that a Match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one Team or its Players it shall be empowered to award the Match to the opponent.
- (k) In cases where a Cup Match has been abandoned owing to the conduct of both Teams or their Players, the Cup Committee shall be empowered to take such further action as it deems appropriate (including disqualifying both Teams from the Competition).
- (l) In the event of a Match being declared void and ordered to be replayed, the Cup Committee shall decide on how the Match expenses are split and shall inform both Teams and the Match Officials.
- (m) The Cup Committee shall review any Match that has taken place where either or both Teams were under a suspension imposed upon them by the FA or an Affiliated Association. In each case the Team that was under suspension would be dealt with in the same manner as if they had participated with ineligible players in accordance with Rule 6. Where both Teams were under suspension, the Match must be declared null and void and shall not be replayed.

17. Provisions for Withdrawal from Competitions



- (a) Teams wishing to withdraw from a Competition after the draw has been made must give at least fourteen (14) days' written notice to their opponents, the Referees Appointment Officer and the Cup Committee. The defaulting Team may not play in any other competition under the jurisdiction of a Sanctioning Authority on the date originally fixed for the Match. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) Any Team withdrawing from a Competition after the draw has been made and who gives less than fourteen (14) days' notice shall, in addition to being liable to be fined in accordance with the Schedule, also be liable for:
- (i) any unavoidable expenses incurred by their opponents (subject to production of appropriate corroborating documentary evidence); and
 - (ii) the Match fees and (where applicable) reasonable travelling expenses of the Match Officials.

Any dispute on the reasonable expenses will be subject to determination by the Cup Committee whose decision shall be final and binding on both Teams.

- (c) Any Multi-Team Club who has more than one (1) Team entered in the Competition and who wishes to withdraw a Team, must withdraw:
- (i) the Team entered in the lowest ranking Competition as set out in Rule 6(n); or
 - (ii) the lowest Team if more than one (1) Team is entered in the same Competition.

Any Multi-Team Club failing to comply with this Rule may be fined in accordance with the Schedule and may, if the Cup Committee deem it appropriate after taking all circumstances into consideration, in addition to the fine in accordance with the Schedule, have its defaulting Team disqualified from the Competition.

- (d) In addition to the provisions of Rules 17(a)-(c), any Team withdrawing:-
- (i) shall have the Match awarded to its opposition; and
 - (ii) may be barred from entering the Competition for the following Playing Season(s) if it fails to provide a satisfactory written explanation to the Cup Committee as to the reasons for its withdrawal.
- (e) 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 Cup Committee in writing within twenty-four (24) hours. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

18. Dimensions of the Field of Play

- (a) The dimensions of the field of play for Grounds in the Competition shall be:

Length: maximum 120 m (130 yards); minimum 90m (100 yards).
Width: maximum 90m (100 yards); minimum 45m (50 yards).

but in any event the dimensions must (i) conform to the Laws of the Game and (ii) conform to the stipulated dimensions of the League of which the Team participates in and upon which the Team's entry to the Competition is based.

- (b) Goal nets and corner flags must be used in all Competition Matches. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.

19. Fitness of Ground for Commencing Play

- (a) Except in instances where local authorities, schools, colleges or private commercial entities declare a blanket postponement over Grounds under their control, all Grounds must be inspected by a referee before a Match is postponed. Failure to have the Ground inspected by a referee before postponing a Match shall result in the matter being referred to the Cup Committee, who shall deal with the matter at their entire discretion (which may include a fine in accordance with the Schedule and/or expulsion from the Competition).



- (b) Each Team must take every precaution to ensure that its Ground is in a fit playing condition. In the event of any doubt as to the condition of the Ground (irrespective of whether the Ground is under the Team's control), the Match referee or a local referee (who has been approved by the Referees' Appointment Officer) should, whenever possible, examine the Ground and decide as to its fitness for play in sufficient time to save the expense of unnecessary journeys being incurred by Teams/Match Officials.
- (c) Subject to the provisions of Rules 19(a) and 19(b), the Referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the Ground in all Matches and shall have the power to abandon or postpone the Match if he believes conditions are detrimental to the welfare of the Participants.
- (d) The referee must report to the ground forty-five (45) minutes before the time of kick-off. If necessary, the Referees Appointment Officer may, by written notice, require the Referee to visit the Ground more than sixty (60) minutes before the time of kick-off any time during the Playing Season.
- (e) Where some but not all Grounds under the Home Team's jurisdiction which have been allocated to Matches become unfit for play, the order of precedence set out in Rule 6(n) must be applied to determine which Competition Matches are played on the Grounds which remain fit.
- (f) Any objections/protests relating to the Ground, goal posts or bars, or other appurtenances of the Match shall not be subsequently entertained by the Cup Committee unless an objection has been lodged with the Referee by the captain of the complainant Team in the presence of a Team Official of the opposing Team no later than thirty (30) minutes before the scheduled time for kick-off. The referee shall require the Home Team to remedy the objection where practicable to do so without unduly delaying the kick-off of the Match.
- (g) When an objection/protest has been lodged with the Referee, a written protest must be made to the CEO within three (3) days (Sunday included) of the date of the Match and neither objection nor protest may be withdrawn, except by leave of the CEO. The Referees' Appointments Officer shall be notified of the protest by noon on the Sunday following the Match or by 9am on the following day if the Match took place on any other day.
- (h) If the Ground of a Home Team is considered unsuitable, the Away Team may complain to the Cup Committee at least fourteen (14) days before the scheduled date of the Match. The complaint must be accompanied by a deposit (the amount of which is set out in the Schedule) which may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the complaint not being upheld or being judged to be frivolous. If the complaint is upheld, the Cup Committee may order the Match to be played at the Ground of the Away Team or at a neutral Ground. If the complaint is not upheld or judged to be frivolous, the Away Team may be called upon to pay the expenses incurred in dealing with the complaint.

20. Reporting Results

- (a) Prior to its first Match in the Competition, each Team must ensure that two (2) of its Officers have been correctly registered on WGS/the FA's Full Time System to enable them to receive the FA's Full Time SMS text messages. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (b) Each Team must submit its Match result by SMS text message to the FA Full-Time system by 6pm on a Saturday, or within two (2) hours of the completion of a Match played on any other day. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (c) In addition to the reporting requirements set out in Rule 20(b), each Team must also notify the result of the Match using the prescribed online forms on the Sanctioning Authority's Full-Time/FA Matchday system. These prescribed forms must be accurate and include:-
 - (i) The name of, and marks awarded to, the referee. Each Team must include an assessment of the referee by allocating a mark out of one hundred (100). Any Team awarding the referee a mark of sixty (60) or less **must** send a covering email to the Referees' Appointment Officer (appointments@amateur-fa.com) giving a valid reason for the low marking.



- (ii) Respect marks.
- (iii) Pitch marks.
- (iv) The names of the Players who participated in the Match (including the names of the playing and non-playing substitute Players).
- (v) The goal scorers.
- (vi) Any cautions, dismissals, sin bins highlighted against the Player concerned.

The prescribed form(s) (and the covering email, if required) **must be completed and submitted within seventy-two (72) hours** of the date of the Match. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule (which shall be increased in the case of repetition of non-compliance for any subsequent rounds).

- (d) Where a text from the Sanctioning Authority's FA Full-Time system has not been received, both Teams must ensure that the result is confirmed by sending an e-mail **within seventy-two (72) hours** of the date of the Match to cups@amateur-fa.com with full and accurate details of the Match – i.e.,:

- (i) the name of the Competition.
- (ii) the identity of the competing Teams.
- (iii) the names of the Match Officials (and mark awarded to the referee. If the mark awarded to the referee is sixty (60) or less, a covering email must be sent in the basis set out in Rule 20(c)(i)).
- (iv) the score (including penalties if necessary).
- (v) The names of the Players who participated in the Match (including the names of the playing and non-playing substitute Players).
- (vi) The goal scorers.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a **daily** fine in accordance with the Schedule (which shall be increased in the case of repetition of non-compliance for any subsequent rounds).

- (e) Teams must also communicate the result to their respective Leagues. Failure to comply with this Rule may result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule (which shall be increased in the case of repetition).

21. Provisions for the AFA Senior Semi-Finals

- (a) The Cup Committee shall arrange the Grounds for the semi-finals of the AFA Senior Cup (**Senior Semi-Finals**) and shall have direct control of all arrangements, receipts and disbursements in connection with the Senior Semi-Finals.
- (b) Details of the dates and Grounds of the Senior Semi-Finals shall be sent to all participating Teams and shall **only** be changed with the prior written consent of the Cup Committee at its sole discretion.
- (c) In the Senior Semi-Finals, the Team drawn first shall have the choice of colours and shall also use the designated home dressing room. Both Teams shall notify their opponents, the Match Officials and the Cup Committee of their proposed colours at least ten (10) days before the Senior Semi-Finals are due to take place. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (d) In both Senior Semi-Finals, a Respect handshake must be carried out by both Teams and the Match Officials prior to the kick-off. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (e) The Match fee (together with reasonable travelling expenses) for Match Officials taking charge of the Senior Semi-Finals shall be paid by the Cup Committee.

22. Provisions for the Competition Finals

- (a) The Cup Committee shall arrange the Grounds for the Finals of all Competitions and shall have direct control of all the arrangements, receipts and disbursements in connection with these Matches. The Match fee (together with reasonable travelling expenses) for Match Officials for all Competition Finals shall be paid by the Cup Committee.



- (b) Details of the dates and Grounds of the Competition Finals shall be sent to all participating Teams. The dates, Grounds and kick-off times of the Competition Finals shall **only** be changed with the prior written consent of the Cup Committee at its sole discretion.
- (c) The Team drawn first in each Final shall have the choice of colours and shall use the designated home dressing room. For the purposes of the Match day programme, both Teams must, at least fourteen (14) days before the Final is due to take place, supply the Cup Committee with (details of):
- (i) their proposed playing colours.
 - (ii) the Club's history and pen pictures of every Player liable to be selected.
 - (iii) a photograph of the Club Crest.
 - (iv) a Team photograph.

Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a **daily** fine in accordance with the Schedule.

- (d) Each Team playing in a Competition Final must, at least seven (7) days before the Final is due to take place, supply the Cup Committee and the Match Officials with the names and contact details of two (2) Spectator Marshalls (who shall be responsible for monitoring and ensuring the provisions of Rules 12 and 22(k) are adhered to). Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (e) In all Finals:
- (i) both Teams and the Match Officials must attend the Final appropriately attired (for the avoidance of doubt, smart casual Shirts, Jackets, Trousers and Club/County Association Ties must be worn).
 - (ii) both Teams and the Match Officials must be ready, prepared and available to have pre/post-Match photographs taken.
 - (iii) all Participants are deemed to have given their consent (i) to being filmed during the Match and (ii) for their images to be used on the AFA's website and social media.
- (f) In all Finals, a Respect handshake must be carried out by both Teams and the Match Officials prior to kick-off. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (g) In all Finals, both Teams must provide to the Match Officials for their approval prior to kick-off of the Final three (3) size 5 footballs that conform to the Laws of the Game. Failure to comply with this Rule will result in a fine in accordance with the Schedule.
- (h) In addition to the Cup, the President (or an individual designated by the Cup Committee) shall present a club memento to the victorious Team as well as commemorative souvenirs for the fourteen (14) Players of both Teams and the four (4) Match Officials. A Team may make an application to the Cup Committee to purchase additional commemorative souvenirs at its own cost and shall be solely responsible for the costs of postage and packaging.
- (i) When a Player taking part in the Final is ordered to leave the field of play for misconduct, the designated Cup Committee representatives who are present at the Final shall decide, at their sole discretion, whether the commemorative souvenir to which they are entitled shall be presented unless the misconduct is for violent conduct for an assault on a Match Official, Player, Team official or spectator (in which case the Player shall not be presented with an award). The Team may apply in writing for the souvenir to be sent to it thereafter and shall be solely responsible for the costs of postage and packaging.
- (j) Should any Player intentionally fail or refuse to attend the presentation ceremony at a Final, they shall forfeit any right to receive a commemorative souvenir (or be presented with the Cup if they are the Captain). The Cup Committee may take further action against any Team or Player who publicly undermines or disregards the AFA's values of fun, fair play, friendship and respect towards the Competition and every Participant alike.
- (k) All Teams playing in a Final must remind their Participants that **no** alcohol is to be brought to the host Ground – i.e., only alcohol purchased at the host Ground during the Final is permitted to be consumed at/during the Final.



- (l) The designated Council Member chosen to represent the Cup Committee at each Final shall be given a stipend of £50 to cover post-Match hospitality for the Match Officials.
- (m) When a Final has been postponed, it shall be played on such date and at such Ground as directed by the Cup Committee at its sole discretion.
- (n) When a Final has been abandoned after it has commenced but before it has been completed, the Cup Committee shall deal with the matter as it sees fit at its sole discretion.

23. Appointment of Match Officials

- (a) Match Officials will be appointed by the Referees' Appointment Officer for all Matches in the Competition. In the event of a Team being advised by the Referees' Appointment Officer that it is not possible to make an appointment, it shall be the responsibility of the Home Team to provide a Referee who shall rank as an official appointment of the AFA. Subject to Rule 23(b), the provision of Assistant Referees shall be at the sole discretion of the Referees' Appointment Officer. Should Assistant Referees be appointed, the Referee is required to provide marks for the Assistant Referees to the Referees' Appointment Officer.
- (b) The Referee and Assistant Referees (where appointed) in all Matches shall be neither past nor present Participants of the competing Teams. Should a Referee receive an appointment they consider is in breach of this Rule, they must notify the Referees' Appointments Officer immediately.
- (c) If:
 - (i) no Referee is appointed; or
 - (ii) the appointed Referee fails to arrive (on time),

a Referee shall be chosen at the Ground and must be mutually agreed by both Teams.

- (d) The Participant appointed pursuant to Rule 23(c) will be considered as an official appointment for:
 - (i) the duration of the Match; or
 - (ii) for such time until the appointed Referee arrives at the Ground.

The absence of the appointed Referee shall not be deemed sufficient cause for the Match not being played. A Referee may not play in the Match. Teams failing to comply with this Rule will be fined in accordance with the Schedule and may be disqualified from the Competition.

- (e) In the case of postponed or abandoned Matches, the Match Officials appointed for the original Match shall be expected to officiate in the re-arranged Match unless otherwise directed by the Referees' Appointment Officer.
- (f) Any Referee who refuses to accept an appointment shall not be permitted to officiate in another match in an AFA League or in a League or cup match under the jurisdiction of another Affiliated Association on the same day.
- (g) A Referee not keeping their engagement and failing to give a satisfactory explanation to the Referees' Appointment Officer for their non-appearance may be reported to the Affiliated Association with which they are registered.
- (h) Where three (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.
- (i) A 4th Official may be appointed and officiate if any of the three (3) 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 shall take over in place of the Referee.
- (j) Whilst it is permissible for Match Officials to wear a coloured referee shirt in the Competition, should the colour of their coloured shirts clash with the kit of either Team, the Match Officials (must not make a Team change its kit but) must wear traditional black shirts (either all black or black with white trim), black shorts and socks which are all black or black with white tops. If they are wearing a



coloured shirt, all Match Officials must wear the same colour. If the Match Officials are unable to wear the same-coloured shirts, they must revert to black.

- (k) All Match Officials should inform the Referees' Appointment Officer at appointments@amateur-fa.com if details of the Match have not been supplied by the Home Team not less than six (6) days prior to the date arranged for the Match.
- (l) Subject to Rules 21(e) and 22(a), the Home Team shall be responsible for the fees of the Referee (details of which are set out in the Schedule), which must be paid either:
 - (i) when the Team Sheet is handed in prior to commencement of the Match; or
 - (ii) **immediately** (whether payment is made in person or via bank transfer) - i.e., no later than thirty (30) minutes after the Match has concluded.

Teams failing to comply with this Rule will be fined in accordance with the Schedule.

- (m) If Assistant Referees are appointed, their Match fees (details of which are set out in the Schedule) shall be shared equally between the Home Team and the Away Team and these Match fees must be paid on the same basis, and at the same time, as set out in Rule 23(l)(i)-(ii). Teams failing to comply with this Rule will be fined in accordance with the Schedule.
- (n) All Match Officials are expected to attend post-Match hospitality.
- (o) In the event of a Match being postponed, Match Officials who have **not** been contacted and who travel to the Ground shall receive their Match fee together with any reasonable travelling expenses.
- (p) All Match Officials appointed to officiate on the Final of any Competition shall be contacted by the Referees' Appointment Officer with details of the pre-Finals presentation evening.
- (q) All Match Officials appointed to the Finals of any Competition shall be contacted by the Referees' Appointment Office in good time and must send brief biographical details to be used in the Match day programme.
- (r) In all Competition Finals, a Respect handshake must be carried out by both Teams and the Match Officials prior to the kick-off.
- (s) Upon written request to the Referees' Appointment Officer, Match Officials shall be supplied with an electronic version of the Competition Rules free of charge.
- (t) No Participant under sixteen (16) years of age shall participate either as a Referee or Assistant Referee in any Match.

24. Protests and Appeals

- (a) All questions relating to the qualification or eligibility of Players or interpretation of these Rules or any dispute or protest whatever shall be referred to the Cup Committee whose decision shall be final and binding. Protests from Clubs relating to Player eligibility should be accompanied, where possible by (photographic) evidence of the Player's participation in the Match. Other evidence shall be considered (e.g., Team Sheets, social media posts) if they clearly indicate participation in the Match.
- (b) Any Team who raises an objection/protest pursuant to Rule 19 and fails to follow up with written notification of the same to the CEO shall be fined in accordance with the Schedule.
- (c) Except in cases where the CEO decides (at their discretion) that there are mitigating circumstances to do otherwise, any dispute or protest must be in writing and contain the particulars of the grounds upon which it is founded and sent to the CEO within three (3) days of the Match to which it relates (Sundays included). The CEO may, at their sole discretion, delegate the protest to the Cup Committee for consideration.



- (d) No dispute or protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the CEO unless the complaining Club has sent a deposit accompanying its protest in accordance with the Schedule. The deposit may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the dispute or protest not being upheld or being judged to be frivolous.
- (e) The CEO shall send a copy of the dispute/protest to the Participant protested against, who shall reply in writing to the CEO within five (5) days of receiving the same. The CEO shall then send a copy of the answer to the complaining Participant and shall consider the submissions once both have been received.
- (f) If a hearing is required, at least seven (7) days' notice shall be given to each Club who may support their case with witnesses. If a Club prefers to state its case solely in writing, then it should indicate as such when forwarding the written response. No Solicitor, Barrister, paralegal or member of CILEX shall represent any Club unless they are the Chair or Secretary of the Club concerned and appears as such on the Club register.
- (g) No member of the Cup Committee who is a member of a Club involved in a dispute or protest shall be involved (except as a witness or representative of his Club) when such protest or complaint is being considered and determined by the CEO.
- (h) Once the CEO has finished their deliberations, they shall contact both Clubs with a written determination. The CEO is empowered to order the defaulting Club or the Club making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of the inquiry or, if it is determined that both Clubs were at fault, to order that the costs be shared by the Clubs.
- (i) A Club that is disqualified from the Competition may appeal in writing within seven (7) days against that decision to an Appeal Board.
- (j) Any appeal shall only be permitted on one or more of the following grounds:
 - (i) the Cup Committee failed to give the Team a fair hearing; and/or
 - (ii) the Cup Committee misinterpreted or failed to comply with the Rules of the Competition relevant to its decision; and/or
 - (iii) the Cup Committee came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have come; and/or
 - (iv) the Cup Committee imposed a penalty, award, order, or sanction that was excessive.
- (k) The decision of the Appeal Board shall be final and binding on all Teams.
- (l) Notwithstanding the foregoing, any breach of procedure or failure to follow any time limit by the CEO or Appeal Board shall not invalidate its decision unless the breach or failure is such as to seriously and irredeemably prejudice the position of the affected Participant.
- (m) Excluding any information which is already in the public domain (other than through the wrongful disclosure by any Participant) or any information which a Participant is required to disclose by law, unless required by Law or with the prior written consent of the CEO, every Participant agrees to keep secret and confidential and not make any public announcement or disclosure or divulge on any website or electronic platform to any third party outside its Club:
 - (i) the existence of, and any details relating to, the appeal;
 - (ii) the existence and contents of any documents or other evidence produced during the appeal.

25. General (Alteration of Rules, Payment of Fines)

- (a) The Cup Committee shall be empowered to alter, expunge or add to these Rules as it shall from time to time deem expedient, but such alteration, expunction or addition shall not come into force until the Playing Season following that in which the Cup Committee shall have decided to take such action **unless** such alteration, expunction or addition shall be required:
 - (i) pursuant to Rule 25(c); or
 - (ii) because of any re-introduction by the Government of any COVID-19-related legal restrictions in England.



- (b) Notice of any proposed alterations to be considered by the Cup Committee shall be submitted to the Cup Committee by 1 January in each Playing Season. The proposals shall be circulated to Committee Members by 21 February and any amendments shall be submitted to the Cup Committee by 28 March. The proposed amendments shall be circulated to Council members with the notice of the last Council Meeting prior to the AGM. Once proposed and seconded, a proposal to amend/alter a Rule shall be carried if a simple majority of those Council Members present and entitled to vote are in favour.
- (c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, if the Cup Committee has to adopt emergency measures to complete the Competitions in any Playing Season, such alteration, expunction or addition shall come into force immediately if two-thirds of Cup Committee members present vote in favour of such action at a Meeting held to deal with an emergency. Details of any Rules amended, expunged or any additional Rules introduced in such circumstances shall be published on the AFA website.
- (d) Subject to a Team's right of appeal in accordance with Rule 24, all fines imposed under these Rules and such other payments as decided upon by the Cup Committee must be paid directly to the AFA not later than seven (7) days after the date of notification of the decision. Any Club failing to pay the required sum by the stipulated date shall have their fine doubled. If the original sum plus the fine for non-payment is not received within seven (7) days of that notification, an additional late fine, as determined by the Cup Committee, shall be imposed. If the amounts levied are still outstanding after a further seven (7) days, the Club shall be suspended from all footballing activity.
- (e) Any Club who fails to:
- (i) comply with an written order or instruction of the Cup Committee in a timely fashion; or
 - (ii) fails to satisfactorily attend to the business and/or correspondence of the Competition when so directed in writing,

shall be liable to be fined in accordance with the Schedule or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Cup Committee.



Schedule

Fees Tariff

Rule		Fee (£)
5(c)	Annual Entry Fee	26
18(l)	Referee Fee	45
18(m)	Assistant Referee Fee	40
14(h) & 19(d)	Deposit for Protests/Appeals	100

Fines Tariff

Rule		Fine (£)
1(b)	Failure to return a Cup in time and in a presentable condition.	50 per day
2(p)	Failure to comply with the provisions of any initiatives of the FA which are adopted by the Cup Committee.	25
4(b)	Failure to provide written confirmation of a County Association's prior written consent to enter a Competition.	25
4(h)	Failure to ensure Team selection follows generally accepted footballing selectorial principles and represents the full playing strength of the Club.	35
5(b)	Late entry.	25
6(h)	Fielding a Player who has not attained the age of 16.	35
	Failure to check availability of children with the Head Teacher.	35
6(m)	Failure to	
	(i) keep a list of the Players who have played for the Team on WGS/the FA's Full-Time system and/or	35
	(ii) produce such records upon demand by the Cup Committee.	35
6(p)	Failure by a Team to provide a satisfactory written explanation to the Cup Committee as required by 6(o) as to the eligibility/qualification of any Player.	35
7(l)	Failure by the Home Team to contact their opponents and the Match Officials by phone or email with full details of the Match within the prescribed timeframe.	25
7(n)	Failure by the Home Team to provide written confirmation of a 3G pitch to the Away Team and Match Officials.	25
7(o)	Failure by the Home Team to advise the Away Team and Match Officials of footwear requirements and any limitations or recommendations regarding the type of boot or stud that may be used on the 3G surface.	25
7(q)	Failure by the Home Team to provide separate, adequate and securely locked dressing rooms, washing and toilet facilities for the Away Team and Match Officials.	25



8(a)	Failure to begin a Match at the scheduled kick-off time.	25
8(b)	Failure to begin a Match 30 minutes or more after the scheduled kick-off time.	35
9(b)&(c)	Failure of any Team coach/Manager/Participant to conduct themselves in a responsible manner.	unlimited
9(d)	Failure, when instructed, to provide barriers or roping to ensure there is no encroaching on the field of play or the impeding of the assistant referees.	25
10	Starting a Match with fewer than nine (9) Players.	25
11(a)	Failure to provide water, tea/coffee or fruit squash at half-time for the Match Officials and/or suitable food and refreshments for all Players and Match Officials after the Match.	35
11(b)	Failure of seven (7) Players from the Away Team to stay and accept the post-Match hospitality provided by the Home Team.	25
12	Failure to the adhere to the AFA's values of fair play and respect to the Competition, opposition and Match Officials.	unlimited
13(b)	Delaying the scheduled time of kick off for a Competition Match by not having a change of colours.	25
13(d)	Failure to have uniquely numbered shirts or altering its selection or numbering after the Team Sheet has been provided to the Match Officials.	25
13(e)	Failure to (i) notify the Match Officials of an alteration before the commencement of the Match; (ii) make the alteration on a replacement Team Sheet before the commencement of the Match.	25 25
13(f)	Changing shirt numbers during the Match without authorisation from the Match Officials.	25
13(g)	Wearing black or very dark shirts.	25
13(h)	Failure of the Goalkeeper to wear colours that distinguish them from the other Players and the Match Officials.	25
13(i)	Failure of the captain to wear a distinguishing armband.	25
13(k)	Failure by the Home Team to provide to the Referee for his approval prior to kick-off of the Match at least two (2) size 5 footballs that conform to the Laws of the Game.	25
16(a)	Failure by the Home Team to inform their opponents, the Match Officials, the Cup Committee and Referees' Appointment Officer of a postponed Match without delay.	25
16(g)	Failure to reimburse the Match Officials if they have travelled to the Ground where a Match has been postponed due to circumstances over which neither Team had control.	35
16(h)	Failure of the defaulting Team to reimburse the Match Officials and the non-defaulting Team.	35



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17(a)	Failure to give at least fourteen (14) days' written notice of intention to withdraw to their opponents, the Referees Appointment Officer and the Cup Committee after the draw has been made.	25
17(b)	Withdrawal from a Competition after the draw has been made with less than fourteen (14) days' notice.	25
17(c)	Failure by a Multi-Team Club to withdraw a Team from the lowest ranking Competition or the lowest Team.	25
17(e)	Failure to give written notice of the desire to withdraw after an abandoned Match.	25
18(b)	Failure to have goal nets or corner flags.	25
19(a)	Failure to have a Ground inspected by a Match Official before a Match is postponed.	25
20(a)	Failure to have two (2) Team Officers registered on WGS/the FA's Full-Time system prior to its first Match in the Competition.	35
20(b)	Failure to report result by SMS text message by 6pm on a Saturday, or within the prescribed timeframe.	35
20(c)	Failure to complete and submit the online forms on the Full-Time/FA Matchday system within the prescribed timeframe.	35
20(c)	Failure to send a covering email to the Referees' Appointment Officer (appointments@amateur-fa.com) giving a valid reason a referee mark below 60 within the prescribed timeframe.	35
20(d)	Failure to confirm result (if no FT SMS text message has been received) by sending a confirmatory e-mail to cups@amateur-fa.com with full details of the Match within the prescribed timeframe.	35
20(e)	Failure to report/confirm result to a league.	25
21(c)	Failure to notify opponents, Match Officials and the Cup Committee of proposed Team colours at least ten (10) days before the date of the Senior Semi-Finals	25
21(d)	Failure to conduct Respect handshake prior to kick-off of a Senior Semi-Final.	25
22(c)	Failure to supply details of playing colours, Player pen pictures, Club history and Club Crest within the prescribed timeframe.	25 per day
22(d)	Failure to provide names and contact details of Spectator Marshalls within the prescribed timeframe.	25
22(e)	Failure to observe dress code for/at a Final and to be ready for pre/post-Match photographs.	25
22(f)	Failure to conduct Respect handshake prior to kick-off of a Final.	25
22(g)	Failure (in a Final) to provide the Referee for their approval prior to kick-off of the Match at least three (3) size 5 footballs that conform to the Laws of the Game.	25
23(l)	Failure to pay the Match Officials within the prescribed timeframe.	50



24(b)	Failure to follow up with written notification.	25
25(e)	Failure to	
	(i) comply with a written order or instruction of the Cup Committee in a timely fashion; or	35
	(ii) satisfactorily attend to the business and/or correspondence of the Competition when directed in writing.	35
	Breach of any other Competition Rule(s) where is no fixed amount.	unlimited