

**CHESHIRE COUNTY FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  
DISTRICT FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  
CHALLENGE CUP COMPETITION RULES  
SATURDAY/SUNDAY COMPETITIONS**

**RULES**

**1. CONTROL**

- a) The ownership, organisation, control and management of the Competitions and any rights associated with it of any nature shall be vested in the Council of the Cheshire County Football Association, who may grant such rights as they consider appropriate to the .....District Football Association. These rules and appendices cover the Saturday and Sunday Challenge Cup Competition(s).
- b) The Council shall have the power to delegate all its powers in relation to the Competitions to a Cups Committee whose decisions on all matters arising out of or in relation to the organisation, control, and management of the Competition (including as to eligibility and qualification) shall be final and binding on all participants in the Competition in relation to these and any other matters not specifically mentioned in the Competition Rules, subject to rule 16.
- c) The Cups Committee shall have the power to propose amendments to the regulations for the organisation, control, and management of the Competition as it, from time to time, deems expedient (the "Competition Rules") subject to agreement by Cheshire County FA.
- d) All participants participating in any way in the Competition shall be bound by and comply with the Competition Rules (and any Rules or Regulations issued pursuant to the Competition Rules)
- e) The Cups Committee shall have the power to appoint a Sub-Committee to exercise the powers of Council in order to expedite decisions to ensure the progress of the Competition.
- f) A Club participating in the Competition shall have only such rights in relation to the Competition (and any match in the Competition) as are expressly granted in writing to the Club under the Competition Rules or by Cheshire County Football Association.
- g) In addition to any other action or penalty, the Cups Committee shall have the power to disqualify any competing Club, or player for any competing Club(s), which it determines to have breached the Rules of The Association or the Competition Rules (any Rules or Regulations issued pursuant to the Competition Rules), and the decision of the Cups Committee shall be final and binding, subject to rule 16.

**2. ENTRY TO THE COMPETITION**

- a) The entry fee for the Competition shall be determined by the District Football Association and shall not exceed fees set by the Cheshire County Football Association for their own competitions. The closing date for the entry being 1<sup>st</sup> August for each season unless otherwise stated. Clubs who do not enter by the required date shall be fined in accordance with DFA rule 11.3 and entered into the Competition, if appropriate, and shall be required to pay the entry fee.
- b) All clubs considered to be Open Age District Association Clubs playing in sanctioned Leagues are required to enter an approved competition of the District Football Association to whom they are allocated, exemption from which may be given by the County Football Association to those clubs that enter the Cheshire County Football Association Amateur or Sunday Challenge Cup competitions.
- c) The competitions shall only be by invitation to clubs/teams allocated to or invited by the .....District Football Association from other District Football Associations affiliated to Cheshire FA except where special permission has been given to admit teams from other County Football Associations.

d) The District Association shall agree the format and player requirements of the competition(s) each season and notify the respective clubs with their appropriate entry forms. The additional requirements that are included within attached appendices shall have the same status as the rules themselves.

e) The Cups Committee has the power to refuse the entry of any club from taking part in its competitions.

f) The Cup shall be competed for annually in accordance with these Rules.

### **3. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS**

a) Contract players are not allowed to play in these competitions. In all rounds of the Competitions a player must be a registered player of his/her Club. In order to be eligible to play in the Final tie, players must have a 28-day playing qualification or have been eligible to play in the Semi Final ties.

b) Any such registration for the-Saturday Challenge Cup competition(s) must have been received and accepted by the League in which his/her Club competes, by 12 noon on the day prior to the playing of the tie and the registration must be continuous through to the date of the tie.

c) Any such registration for the-Sunday Challenge Cup competitions(s) must have been received and accepted by the League in which his Club competes, by 12 noon on the day prior to the playing of the tie and the registration must be continuous through to the date of the tie.

d) It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that players coming from overseas Associations (including Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland) have the required International Transfer Clearance/ Certificate. The International Transfer Clearance/Certificate takes precedence over a player's registration therefore this is also required by 12 noon on the day prior to the playing of the tie for the player's registration to be valid.

e) A player shall not in the same season play for more than one competing club/team in each Competition. Players who have played in the Cheshire Senior Cup cannot play in the \_\_\_\_\_ District Saturday or Sunday Challenge Cups.

f) In the case of postponed ties only those players shall be allowed to play who were eligible for the original game. A player who has been suspended may play in postponed matches after the term of his/her suspension has expired.

g) Any Club playing an ineligible player will be struck out of the Competition, and the Cups Committee or a committee appointed by the Cups Committee may impose such other penalty as it considers appropriate.

h) All questions of eligibility or qualification of the competitor shall be referred to the Association whose decision shall be final.

i) A team struck out of the competition, or withdrawing for any reason, maybe replaced by the defeated club at the discretion of Council.

### **4. COMPETITION ARRANGEMENTS**

a) The names of the Clubs entered for the Competition(s) shall be placed in one lot and shall be drawn in couples at a time or in sections as deemed necessary by Council. At each drawing the Club first drawn shall have the choice of ground (subject to conditions of entry as decided by the Association).

b) The Association may exempt the previous finalists and such additional Clubs as they may approve from the first round of the Saturday/Sunday Cup competitions.

c) For the Saturday/Sunday Challenge Cup Competition, the District Association. shall have the power if deemed necessary, to draw the clubs in section(s) with each club playing every member of that section.

once only, either home or away as decided by the Council. The winner(s) of each section will be decided on total points, goal difference, goal average and then goals for. If two clubs tie on the above qualification, then the Council under conditions will arrange a play-off game. The winning team(s) in each section will be drawn to form quarter or semi-final ties as appropriate to be played on ground(s) as decided by the Council. Games will then apply as per Cup Rule 13.

d) After each drawing, the Secretary shall notify to each of the Clubs drawn the name of the Club against whom it is drawn and the date and kick off time on which the game must be played.

e) Any Club refusing or failing to play the Club against whom it has been drawn on the date and time notified, and without sufficient reason for so doing, shall be adjudged to have lost the match, and may be, deemed to have been guilty of misconduct, and shall be liable to a fine of £25 and/or otherwise dealt with as the Cups Committee shall determine.

## **5. GROUNDS**

a) Clubs entering the Competition being drawn at home and not having a ground acceptable for the playing of the game and then having to play on their opponent's ground, shall be treated as having been drawn away from home.

b) All semi-final and final ties must be played, wherever possible, on a ground where the playing area is enclosed by a fixed barrier, or completely roped off by a rope material of not less than 8mm in diameter. No person should encroach within this area without the permissions of the match officials.

c) Separate dressing accommodation must be available for each team and the match officials. Showers or bathing facilities must be provided.

d) If the ground of the Club having choice of ground shall be considered unsuitable for a cup-tie, their opponents may protest to the Association, who may order the match to be played on the ground of the protesting Club, or on a neutral ground. Such protest to be made within six days of the draw being received. In the case of appurtenances of the ground being temporarily unfit in consequence of special causes, a protest may be lodged with the Referee before the start of the game, the game shall be played under protest, and the Association shall consider such protest. If the protest is sustained the game shall be ordered to be replayed on such ground and date as the Association deems appropriate.

e) No Club may change the registered address of its ground or their kick off times, for the playing of any cup-tie without first receiving permission of the Competition Secretary or Assistant Competition Secretary.. Any Club found to be in breach of this rule shall be liable to expulsion from the Competition and a fine of not less than £20.

f) Notwithstanding the provisions of Rule 4(a) and 5(a) and (c) the Association shall have the power to order the game to be played on their opponent's or neutral ground if the ground of the Club having choice of grounds is repeatedly unfit (e.g., after 2 weeks) thus hindering the progress of the Competition.

g) The home Club is responsible for statutory pitch markings, provision of corner posts of regulation height, goal nets and match balls. Failure to provide renders a Club liable to a fine of not less than £10 and possible dismissal from the Competition.

h) Inspection of grounds for fitness may be made only by the appointed Match Officials or other Official with the prior approval of the District Football Association Competition Secretary or Referees Secretary, subject to the organisation responsible for the ground e.g., Local Authority.

i) Any club causing the postponement of a match without due cause or reason may be struck out of the competition and fined a sum of not less than £25.

j) Football Turf Pitches (3G Artificial Pitches) are allowed in these Competitions provided that, they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's Register of Football Turf Pitches. The HOME Club is also responsible for advising participants of footwear requirements when confirming match arrangements in accordance with Rule 10.

## **6. COLOURS**

a) Clubs having similar colours must change. In all ties the **HOME** Club must change. Goalkeepers must wear colours which distinguish them from other players. Player's shirts shall be clearly numbered on the back in accordance with the official team sheet. No change of numbers during the match shall be allowed except on a change of goalkeeper or where a player has been required by the Referee to change his shirt because of a blood injury. Failure to comply with this Rule renders the Club liable to a fine of £20 for each offence.

b) In the final tie both clubs must play in their registered first choice colours or as notified to this Association at least 14 days prior to the Final. Failure to do so will incur a fine of £25. If their colours are deemed by the Council or appointed match official to be similar both clubs must change unless mutually agreed. Clubs failing to change colours, as required, in any match will be subject to a fine of not less than £25.

c) No player should wear shirts that in any way conflict with the black shirts worn by the match officials.

## **7. OFFICIALS**

a) Referees and Assistant Referees (where applicable) shall be appointed by the Honorary Referees Secretary. In those games where, official Assistant Referees are not appointed by the District F.A., each club **MUST** provide a suitable person to assist the Referee in line duties if requested by the match official. Clubs failing to provide such a person shall be fined £10.

b) The Referee at the conclusion of each tie shall, where necessary, complete a match report form with the exact time of starting and cause of the late start, or any other breaches of competition rule (if any) in writing to the Competition Secretary of the District Football Association within 72 hours of the match being played.

c) Match officials must be in attendance, at all ties, at least 30 minutes before the appointed time of kick-off and 45 minutes in Final ties. It shall be within the power of the Association to report any matters regarding match officials to Cheshire FA for any necessary further action to be taken.

## **8. LIST OF PLAYERS**

a) In all competitions, up to 5 substitutes may be selected from 5 players, subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of Association Football. These are not repeat substitutions

b) Substitutes must be named to the Referee before the start of the game, and only those named will be allowed to participate in the game.

c) Should any nominated player or substitute sustain an injury after the submission of the "Official Team Sheet" to the Referee and before kick-off he/she may be replaced provided the Referee is Informed before the commencement of the match.

## **9. TEAM BENCHES**

a) In the Semi-Final and Final ties, only technical staff and substitutes may occupy the team benches and a list of the authorized personnel must be provided by each Club to the Referee at least 30 minutes before kick-off.

b) The occupants of the benches must behave in a responsible manner at all times. Misconduct by occupants will be reported by the Referee to The County Football Association, who shall have the power to impose sanctions as deemed fit.

#### **10. LOCATION OF GROUNDS**

Each home Club must confirm to the Match Officials and the visiting Club the location of the ground and their playing colours, at least 5 days before the date of the game. Clubs failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to a fine of not less than £10.

#### **11. TIME OF KICK-OFF AND PLAYING UNDER STRENGTH**

- a) Clubs must be prepared to kick-off at the appointed time as notified by the Competitions Secretary.
- b) Those Clubs responsible for a late kick-off shall be fined £2.00 per minute delayed.
- c) No deviation from the appointed time will be allowed unless prior permission has been given by the Competition Secretary or Assistant Competition Secretary.
- d) Clubs not fielding eleven players at the appointed kick-off time shall be subject to a fine of not less than £10 per player short and £5 per player short for part of the game or as the Association shall direct.
- e) Clubs failing to fulfil a fixture shall be fined a sum of £25 and will be dismissed from the competition.
- f) The Association reserves the right to dismiss teams from the competition in the event of proven misconduct.

#### **12. DURATION OF GAMES**

The duration of all games shall be ninety minutes. The half time interval shall be a maximum 15 minutes, and this may only be altered with the consent of the Match Referee.

#### **13. DRAWN/POSTPONED GAMES**

- a) In the case of a draw after 90 minutes the tie shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the procedure adopted by the International Football Association Board.
- b) Postponed or abandoned games shall be played on a date to be notified by the Competition Secretary.
- c) When a first match has been postponed or abandoned before the completion of 90 minutes, with neither Club being at fault, it must be replayed on the same ground.
- d) Matches abandoned through the fault of the Clubs shall be dealt with by the Association.
- e) It is the responsibility of the Home Club to advise the District Football Association, their opponents, and the Match Officials, when a game has been postponed for whatever reason. Failure to do so will incur a fine of £15.

#### **14. ADVICE OF RESULT**

- a) Immediately each game is completed the home team must notify the result as directed and by no later than 6.00pm on the date the match is played.
- b) Notice of the result of each match together with the full names of the competing players (showing name against the number of the shirt worn in the match) shall be sent by each of the competing Clubs on the match report form provided so as to reach the Competition Secretary within 72 hours of the game being played.
- c) For evening fixtures, the result should be reported within 30 minutes from the end of the game.
- d) Clubs failing to comply with this Rule will be subject to a fine of £15 for each offence.

## **15. PROTESTS**

- a) Protests other than those under Rule 5(c) must be lodged in duplicate with the District Competition Secretary within three days after the match. Two copies of the protest must be lodged and must be accompanied by a fee of £25. Such fee may be forfeited to the funds of the Association. The Club adjudged in default may be called upon to pay such expenses as the Association shall determine.
- b) In the Final tie all protests as to players' eligibility must be lodged with two members of Council prior to the conclusion of the game.
- c) Should either of the two Clubs in connection with a protested Cup tie have a member on the Council of the Association, such member shall withdraw whilst the said protest is being considered.

## **16. APPEALS**

- a) A Club, within 7 days of receipt by them of written notification of the decision of the ..... District Football Association, may appeal against such decision by lodging particulars in duplicate, accompanied by a fee of £35.00, such appeal being addressed to the Chief Executive of The Cheshire County Football Association Limited for the adjudication of a Board of Appeal, whose decision shall be final and binding on all concerned.
- b) In the event of an appeal being successful the fee shall be returned to the Club in whole or part at the discretion of the Board of Appeal, who shall decide by whom the costs of the appeal must be borne. A copy of the Appeal must be sent to the District Football Association Secretary and the operation of the decision of the ..... District Association shall not be suspended pending the result of the appeal, unless a Board of Appeal or the Council of The Cheshire County Football Association Limited through its officers, orders such suspension.
- c) Any such appeal shall only be permitted on one or more of the following grounds:
  - (i) The Cups Committee or a committee appointed by the Cups Committee misinterpreted/failed to comply with the procedures relevant to the hearing of the charge.
  - (ii) The Cups Committee or a committee appointed by the Cups Committee came to a decision on the facts of the case which no reasonable body could have reached or.
  - (III) The Cups Committee or a committee appointed by the Cups Committee imposed a sanction that is excessive.
- d) Any appeal must be made in accordance with such procedures as may be determined by Cheshire County FA from time to time.
- e) For the avoidance of doubt a Club may not appeal against any penalty imposed on it other than expulsion from the Competition.

## **17. SEMI-FINAL AND FINAL TIES**

- a) Semi Final ties will be played on the ground of the first drawn club.
- b) Each Club shall be provided with 5 complimentary tickets for the Final ties only for the sole use of participating players and club officials.

## **18. AWARD TO FINALISTS**

- a) The Association will present 16 trophies to the winners and runners-up, and trophies to Match Officials in the Final ties.

b) No player/club official sent from the field of play, or dismissed prior to or after a final tie, for whatever reason, shall receive a trophy/medal on the day.

c) It shall be open to such a player's or club official's club to apply to the District Association Secretary, in writing, within 14 days of the final tie, for the player/club official to receive a trophy/medal giving reasons why it is felt this should be agreed.

d) The Cups Committee shall have sole discretion in considering such a request once the alleged misconduct which resulted in the player/club official dismissal has been dealt with by the County Football Association and its decision shall be final and binding.

## **19. RECEIPT OF THE TROPHY**

a) At the conclusion of the Final tie (provided that no protest has been lodged) the Cup and trophies shall be presented on the ground. The winners will be allowed to celebrate and have photographs taken with the trophy. The Cup to be returned to a member of the District Football Association one hour after the end of the game.

On request, the winners will be allowed to have access to the Cup for any presentation evening or similar events but must be returned to the District FA the day following the event or as instructed.

Failure to return the Cup as instructed will incur a fine of £100.

All Cups belonging to the competition shall be insured annually by Cheshire County Football Association.

## **20. FINES & CORRESPONDENCE**

a) All fines should be paid within 14 days of notification. Failure to do so will incur a further fine of £25 for failing to deal with correspondence as per District Football Association rule 11.3.

b) Failure to respond, within 7 days, to District Football Association rule 11.3 will result in the matter being referred to Cheshire County FA that may result in your club / team fixtures being suspended until the outstanding monies have been paid. This action may also incur an additional administrative fee from Cheshire County FA in addition to the outstanding fines.

## **21. MATCH EXPENSES**

a) In all rounds of the competitions except for Finals the match fees shall be shared. The fees payable to match officials in all rounds up to the Finals shall be determined annually by the competition, having regard to the fees set by Cheshire County FA.

The Mid Cheshire District Football Association will pay the match officials in the Final ties.

## **CUP TIE CHARGES AND EXPENSES**

**Saturday & Sunday Competitions including Under 18s - £38 (Assistants £25) inclusive of travel**

**Final tie – Fees to be confirmed**

**Match Officials who travel a round trip of more than 20 miles will be entitled to 40p per mile for the excess miles)**

b) In the event of a Reserve Official being officially appointed to any game he/she will be entitled to the same fee as the Assistant Referee.

c) In the event of a postponed or cancelled game, the match official(s) attending shall be entitled to a half fee where a fee is payable.

d) If in the unusual event of a Final Tie being called off on the day, the relevant DFA can consider if the Match Official's need to be compensated in any way. They will of course have their

travel paid if they have travelled to the venue.

## **22. MATCH EXPENSES**

### **Disputes**

The Council shall decide any dispute as to excessive charges.

## **23. EMERGENCY COMMITTEE**

An Emergency Committee to deal with matters of extreme urgency shall consist of at least three members of the DFA Council.