

Cheshire FA Youth U13s & U16s Boys and U14s & U16s Girls

Cup Competition Rules

Season 2023-24

Competition Secretary

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1. CONTROL

a) The ownership, organisation, control and management of the Competition and any rights associated with it of any nature shall be vested entirely and exclusively in the Council of the Cheshire County Football Association.

b) The Council shall have the power to make, delete and amend regulations for the organisation, control and management of the Competition as it, from time to time, deems expedient (the "Competition Rules") subject only to the authority of the Board where such matters relate to financial or commercial matters. These rules will apply to youth boys and girl's competitions.

c) 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)

d) The Council shall have the power to appoint a Committee (the "Youth Committee") The Committee shall have the power to exercise all powers of the Council in relation to the Competition and to make 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) which shall be deemed decisions of the Council and 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. The Youth Committee shall have, on behalf of the Council, the power to take such action and make such decisions, orders, rulings and impose such penalties as it deems necessary and follow such procedures as it considers appropriate and such shall be finding and binding on all participants. In considering such matters, the Council shall not be bound by any enactment or Rule of Law relating to the admissibility of evidence in preceding before a Court of Law. The Youth 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.

e) 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 to the Club under the Competition Rules or by The Association in writing.

f) In addition to any other action or penalty, the Council 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 Council be final and binding.

2. THE COMPETITIONS

Shall be named as follows:

Cheshire County Football Association Boys & Girls Minor Cup (Over 11 & Under 13 years as at midnight on the 31st of August of the playing season)

Cheshire County Football Association Boys & Girls Junior U14s Cup (Over 12 & Under 14 years as at midnight on the 31st of August of the playing season).

Cheshire County Football Association Boys & Girls Junior U15s Cup (Over 13 & Under 15 years as at midnight on the 31st of August of the playing season).

Cheshire County Football Association Boys & Girls Youth U16s Cup (Over 14 & Under 16 years as at midnight on the 31st August of the playing season).

All BOYS games shall be played on a Sunday unless the Council directs otherwise.

All GIRLS games shall be played on a Saturday unless the Council directs otherwise.

3. CLUBS

The Competitions are open only to Clubs by invitation whose first affiliation is with the Cheshire County Football Association.

4. ENTRY FEES

The entry fee and the closing date for entries shall be decided by the Council on recommendations from the CCFA Youth Committee.

5. ELIGIBILITY OF PLAYERS

a) The ages of the players qualified to play in each Competition shall be as determined as in Rule 2.

b) In All rounds of the competition prior to the Final tie, a player must have been a sanctioned league registered player of his/her club previous to the date fixed for the playing of the tie.

Any such registration for the Youth/ Junior/Minor Challenge Cups must have been received and accepted by the League in which the club competes, by 12 noon on the day previous to the date fixed for the playing of the tie and the registration must be continuous through to the date of the match.

In order to be eligible to play in the Final tie, players must have been eligible to play in the Semi Final ties or have a 28-day playing qualification.

Contract players as defined in Football Association Rules, are not permitted in this Competition. No player registered with a FA Premier League or Football League Academy under the Elite Player Performance Plan contained within Youth Development Rules (FA Website) will be permitted to play in this competition.

Only a maximum of FIVE players registered with a "Junior Premier League - JPL" may be included in a team squad for a fixture in this competition.

Players registered or having been registered during the current season with a JPL MUST be identified on the Match Team sheet and exchanged with opponents 15 minutes prior to kick off time, in the presence of the Match Referee.

d) In all Competitions:

i) A player shall not in the same season play for more than one competing Club/team.

ii) In the case of drawn, postponed or replayed matches only those players shall be allowed to play who were eligible for the original game. (This Rule does not debar players who were serving disciplinary suspensions)

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

iv) All questions of eligibility or qualification shall be referred to the Council, on recommendation from the CCFA Youth Committee, whose decision shall be final.

e) Substitutes:

i) Youth U16s, Minor & Junior Cup Competitions - Each team will be allowed five substitute players in each game, who may be nominated from a maximum of five. Such players must be named to the referee before the commencement of the game. Players not so named will not be allowed to participate. A player who has been substituted him/herself becomes a substitute and may replace another player at any time subject to the substitution being carried out in accordance with Law 3 of the Laws of Association Football.

f) It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that players (10 years or over) coming from an overseas Association (including Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and the Republic of Ireland) have the required International Transfer/Clearance Certificate. International Transfer/Clearance Certificate takes precedence over a player's registration therefore this is also required by 12 noon on the Saturday prior to the playing of the tie for the player's registration to be valid.

g) All matches will be played on the conference dates and times. Matches will only be re arranged from the conference dates/times as a result of postponement due to inclement weather. No other changes will be considered unless agreed with the Competitions Secretary

6. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMPETITIONS

Draw for Competitions:

a) The names of the Clubs entered for the Competition shall be placed on one lot and shall be drawn in couples at a time and the first drawn Club shall have choice of ground in all rounds except the Final tie.

b) The Council may exempt the previous season's Semi-finalists and such other Clubs as they may approve from the first round of the Competitions.

c) As soon as is practicable after each drawing, the Competition Secretary shall intimate to each of the Clubs drawn, the name of the Club against whom it is drawn and the time and date on which the game is to be played.

d) Any Club refusing or failing to play the Club against whom it has been drawn on the date intimated to it, and without sufficient reason for so doing, shall be adjudged to have lost the match and may be deemed by the Council to have been guilty of misconduct and liable to such out of pocket expenses and liabilities as are incurred by their failure to play. The Council shall decide whether "sufficient reason" is acceptable, and their decision shall be final.

7. GROUNDS

a) All ties, prior to the Final, will be played on the ground of the first drawn club and must be played on a football ground approved by the Council.

b) No club/team may change the registered address of its ground for the playing of any cup tie without first receiving permission from the Competition Secretary. Any club/team found to be in breach of this rule shall be liable to expulsion from the competition and a fine of £15

c) If the ground of the Club having choice of ground shall be considered unsuitable for a Cup-tie, their opponents may appeal to the Council who may order the match to be played on the ground of the opponents Club, or on a neutral ground. Such protest must be made within six days of the draw being received.

d) In the case of the appurtenances of the ground being temporarily unfit in consequence of special clauses, a protest may be lodged with the Referee before the start of the game and the game shall be played under protest. The Council shall consider such protests at its next meeting and decide the validity of same.

In the event of a valid protest the game may be ordered to be replayed on such ground and date as the Council decide.

e) The Council shall have the power to order games to be played on opponent's grounds or neutral grounds if the grounds of Clubs having choice are unfit, thus hindering the progress of the Competition.

f) The home Club shall be responsible for statutory pitch markings, provision of corner posts of regulation height, goal nets and two match balls. For Semi-final Ties the pitch is to be roped off down both touchlines and located 1.5 meters back from the touchline by using the Respect barriers or rope of a minimum 8mm diameter. Failure to provide these items will render the Club liable to a fine not exceeding £15 for each offence and possible dismissal from the Competition.

g) Inspection of grounds for fitness may be made only by the match official or other official with the prior approval of the Honorary Referees Secretary or Competitions Secretary— subject to the organisation responsible for the ground e.g. Local Authority

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

i) 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 11, and also allowing opponents to be allowed to train on the facility for a period of 45 minutes before the fixture, if requested.

8. 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 and match officials. 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.

9. MATCH OFFICIALS

In all rounds prior to the Final, the Match Officials' fee shall be £30 inclusive of travelling expenses and shall be the responsibility of the HOME club. In the Semi-Final ties, the Referees Fees shall be £30 inclusive of travel, the Assistant Referees fee shall be £22 inclusive of travel, which will be the responsibility of Cheshire FA.

In the event of a postponed or cancelled game, the Match Officials attending shall be entitled to a half fee.

Match Officials, where applicable, shall be appointed by the Cheshire County Football Association. In those games where, official Assistant Referees are not appointed, each Club must provide a suitable person to assist the Referee in line duties. Clubs failing to supply such a person shall be fined £15.

Appointed Match Officials must be in attendance at least 30 minutes prior to the appointed time of kick-off. Match officials must wear black kit.

It shall be within the power of the Council to impose fines on Match Officials who cause late starts or who are guilty of other offences.

10. LISTS OF PLAYERS

a) In all games, each Club shall provide a list of the names of players in the game (including the names of substitutes) to the Referee and a representative of their opponents in the presence of the Referee at least 15 minutes before the kick-off, in matches prior to the Semi-Final, and 30 minutes in the Semi-Final and Final (the Official Team Sheet). Players named on the list must wear the corresponding shirt number and also be named correctly on the match report form returned to the County FA in accordance with Rule 16. Any Club failing to do so will be liable to be fined a sum not exceeding £25.

b) 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.

11. ADVISING OPPONENTS AND MATCH OFFICIALS

Each HOME Club must advise their opponents and Match Officials at least five days before the game of:

- a) the location of the ground and
- b) their playing colours

Clubs failing to comply shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £15.00

12. KICK-OFF TIMES

a) Clubs must be prepared to kick-off at the appointed time determined by the Council. Clubs responsible for a late kick-off time shall be fined 50p per minute.

b) Kick off times shall be determined by the Competition Secretary or CCFA as advised on the competition entry form. Clubs must indicate on their application form the kick-off time if drawn at home. Any deviation from this time, or from the ground details, will only be allowed with the prior permission of the Competition Secretary.

13. DURATION OF GAMES AND MATCH BALL

Youth U16s Cup – Two equal halves of 40 minutes each way – Ball size 5

Junior U15s Cup – Two equal halves 40 minutes each way – Ball size 5

Junior U14s Cup – Two equal halves of 35 minutes each way – Ball size 4

Minor U13s Cup – Two equal halves of 35 minutes each way – Ball size 4

The half time interval shall not be less than five minutes, and this may only be altered with the consent of the match Referee.

14. DRAWN/POSTPONED/REPLAYED GAMES

a) In all rounds including semi-final ties, if the match is drawn after 80/70 minutes play (as the case may be) 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.

b) All postponed or abandoned games shall be played within seven days or as the Council shall determine.

c) When a match has been postponed or abandoned before the completion of 90 / 80 / or 70 minutes (as the case may be), with neither Club being at fault, it must be replayed in its entirety on the same ground or ground as decided by the Association.

d) Matches abandoned through the fault of the Clubs shall be dealt with by the Association.

e) When games are postponed, it is the RESPONSIBILITY OF THE HOME CLUB to inform appointed Match Officials, opponents, League Secretary, and the Competition Secretary. Failure to do so will incur a fine of £15

15. GROUND INSPECTIONS

In the event of the appointed Match Officials being unavailable only a Cheshire County FA registered Referee may inspect grounds for fitness, and then only with the consent of the Competition Secretary or the Honorary Referee Appointments Officer – subject to the organisation responsible for the ground e.g. Local Authority

16. ADVICE OF RESULT

a) After each game is completed the HOME team must notify the result to the Competition Secretary or 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 names and dates of birth of the competing players shall be sent by both Clubs on the official form provided to reach the Competition Secretary within 72 hours of the match being played.

Clubs failing to comply with this Rule shall be fined £15 for each offence.

17. PROTESTS

a) Protests must be lodged with the Cheshire County FA Youth Secretary within three days after the match. Two copies of the protest must be lodged and must be accompanied by a fee of £60.00 which may be forfeited to the funds of the Competition at the discretion of the Council.

b) In Final ties, all protests as to players' eligibility must be lodged prior to the conclusion of the game.

c) All protests will be heard by a panel of members (at least 3) from Council members on the CCFA Youth Committee or as appointed by CCFA Chairman or his nominee.

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.

18. PROVISIONS CONCERNING APPEALS

a) A Club that is expelled from the Competition may appeal against that decision to an appeal board comprising three members of Council selected by the Chairman of Council or his nominee. Any such appeal shall only be permitted on one or more of the following grounds;

i) The Youth Committee or a committee appointed by the Youth Committee misinterpreted/failed to comply with the procedures relevant to the hearing of the charge.

ii) The Youth Committee or a committee appointed by the Youth Committee came to a decision on the facts of the case which no reasonable body could have reached or;

iii) The Youth Committee or a committee appointed by the Youth Committee imposed a sanction that is excessive.

b) Any appeal must be made in accordance with such procedures as may be determined by Cheshire County F.A. from time to time.

c) For the avoidance of doubt a Club may not appeal against any penalty imposed on it other than expulsion from the Competition.

19. FINAL TIES

a) The Council shall decide the grounds, date, and kick-off time.

b) All expenses incurred in staging the final ties will be paid by the Cheshire County Football Association.

c) In the final tie each club should be provided with 25 tickets to gain access to the changing facilities.

d) In the event of the Final tie being drawn at 80 minutes or 70 minutes (as the case may be) extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played. If the score is still 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.

20. AWARD TO FINALISTS

The Council may present mementos to the Winners, Runners-up, and Match Officials in the Final ties. Sixteen mementos shall be presented.

21. RECEIPT OF TROPHY

At the conclusion of the Final tie (provided no protest has been lodged) the Cup and Awards shall be Presented on the ground. The winners be allowed to celebrate and have photos etc taken with the trophy. The Trophy to be returned to a member of the County FA one hour after the end of the game.

On request the winners be allowed to have access to the Cup for any presentation evening or similar event but must be returned to the County FA the day following the event.

Failure to return the trophy by the required date will incur a fine of £100

All Cups belonging the Competition shall be insured annually by the Cheshire County Football Association

22. OTHER RULES

The Council shall have powers to make other rules as they from time to time deem expedient.

23 Match Expenses

Decision of the Council (regarding match expenses)

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 at their opponent's ground shall be treated as having been drawn away from home.

All match official fees are to be paid by the home club.

Cup tie charges and expenses
All rounds (Excluding Final)

Referees fee £33 (including Travel)

Assistant Referee fee £25 (when appointed, and including Travel)

Final Tie

Souvenir Trophy and Travel @ 40p per mile

In the event of a reserve official being appointed to any game he or she will be entitled to the same fee as the Assistant Referee.

If attended, Officials are entitled to half their fees if the match to which they were appointed to is not played.

b) Disputes

The Council shall decide any dispute as to excessive charges.

24. EMERGENCY COMMITTEE

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