

**Cumberland Football Association**  
**The Cumberland Cup Rules**  
**Season 2025-2026**

**Constitution**

1. The Competition will be played within the rules and regulations of the Cumberland Football Association and the Football Association and will be in accordance with the 'laws of the game' (as determined by the International Football Association Board).

**Entry**

2. The Competition is for all Saturday clubs. Entry is mandatory for all clubs who must meet the facilities criteria; no exclusions are permitted. Clubs that withdraw will be fined £25. Clubs consisting of two or more teams will only be permitted to enter one team but all registered players within the club will be eligible to play in the competition.

The Cumberland Football Association may reject the application of any Club/Team to participate in the Competition at its entire discretion. If a Club/Team is removed from the league in which it is playing or its league fixtures are suspended, once it has been accepted into the competition, The Cumberland FA has the power to remove the Club/Team from the Competition.

3. Clubs must have changing facilities with running water for their visitors. It is mandatory for all clubs to provide bathing facilities for players and match officials after the game.

**Qualification of Players**

4. To play in this competition a player must have achieved the age of 16.
5. A player would be considered as registered for a Club/Team in this competition if they are currently registered with that specific Club/Team as a registered player.
6. A player can only play for one Team in this competition.

A player playing for more than one Club and/or Team(s) will be banned from taking part in the competition and the offending Club and or Team will also be expelled from the competition.

7. In the event of a postponed or replayed match, only those players shall be allowed to play who were registered to play at the time fixed for playing the original round or CFA approved game date, except by special permission of the CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee.
8. Transferred players are permitted to play for their new club within this competition providing they have been approved by their relevant league's management committee and have not appeared as a starting player or used substitute upon a team sheet for a previous club within this competition.
9. A player representing a club without the appropriate transfer will be banned from taking part in the competition and fined for their action, the amount to be determined by the CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee. The offending club will also be expelled from the competition.
10. In order to be eligible for the Semi-Final and Final, the players must have been correctly registered and eligible for the Quarter Final of the Competition, except by special permission of the CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee.

## Conditions of Play, Times of Kick off, Postponements, Substitutes

11. Matches can be played on FA approved 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation artificial surfaces. The home club is responsible for advising participants of footwear requirements when confirming match arrangements at least 3 days prior to the tie.
12. Clubs at Steps 1-6 and the EFL will enter the competition at the 2<sup>nd</sup> Round stage.
13. Clubs drawn at home who have floodlight facilities MUST play mid-week in order to minimise conflict with Saturday fixtures; (mid-week is classified as a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday), unless mutually agreed otherwise. The home club shall offer 2 mid-week dates (email is acceptable), one of which MUST be agreed to by the away club. The offered dates must either be during the week immediately preceding or succeeding the scheduled round date. This must be adhered to unless a mutual agreement is made between the competing clubs and the CFA to play earlier or later. This communication is also to be copied to the CFA for reference in cases of dispute (email is acceptable – [countycups@cumberlandfa.com](mailto:countycups@cumberlandfa.com)). The agreed date must be confirmed directly to the County Office within 7 days of the date of issue of the draw for that particular round.

Clubs at Steps 1-4 drawn away from home will play in accordance with FA Rule 8.4, and matches shall not be played on a Saturday without permission of the Competition Secretary (League). Clubs should consider requesting closed dates with their League where possible for County Cup ties. The home club shall offer 2 mid-week dates (email is acceptable), one of which MUST be agreed to by the away club. The offered dates must either be during the week immediately preceding or succeeding the scheduled round date. This must be adhered to unless a mutual agreement is made between the competing clubs and the CFA to play earlier or later. This communication is also to be copied to the CFA for reference in cases of dispute (email is acceptable – [countycups@cumberlandfa.com](mailto:countycups@cumberlandfa.com)). The agreed date must be confirmed directly to the County Office within 7 days of the date of issue of the draw for that particular round.

Clubs not complying with this requirement may be fined and may be dismissed from the Competition.

Failure to reach agreement within this timescale must be notified to the County Office following which the CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee will specify the date the game will be played.

14. The dates for each round, indicated with the draw for the competition are binding, with the exception of clubs with floodlights or clubs at Steps 1-4 (see rule 13). Clubs not complying with these dates will be dismissed from the competition.

However:

- a) Clubs/Teams wishing to play their ties prior to the end date specified are eligible to do so if the proposed date is mutually agreeable with both Clubs/Teams, the CFA appointed match official and the authorising authorities (league and CFA Sanctions and Competitions Committee). Clubs/Teams wishing to play prior to the specified draw date must submit a written request to the CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee at least 7 days prior to the specified draw date. The CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee will then make a decision, which is final and binding.
- b) Any Club/Team wishing to play after the specified draw date must submit a written request to the CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee (outlining the reason for the application) at least 7 days

prior to the specified draw date. The CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee will then make a decision, which is final and binding.

Clubs/Teams not complying with these dates or a decision made by the CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee will be dismissed from the competition.

15. The date and venue for the Final tie will be specified by the County FA.
16. Both secretaries are to contact each other to confirm colours and directions to the ground and any other relevant factors including access to changing facilities, after match hospitality etc. When colours clash the away team will change unless alternative arrangements are mutually agreed by the competing clubs. In the event of a colour clash in the final the first named club is classed as the home team.
17. The duration of the game will be 90 minutes, 45 minutes each way (minimum period allowed is 35 minutes each way). Any reduction is to be mutually agreed with the referee prior to kick off.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> Round stage through to the Quarter-Final stage, should the game be tied at full time, then kicks from the penalty mark will decide the winners.

In the Semi-Final and Finals, should the game be tied at full time, 30 minutes extra time will be played (15 minutes each way) with a minimum period of 10 minutes each way permissible. If the game is still tied, then kicks from the penalty mark will decide the winners. Extra time can be dispensed with if this is agreed mutually between both teams and notified to the match official. The half time interval shall not exceed 15 minutes and can only be altered with the consent of the match referee.

18. A total of five substitutes can be named and all five will be permitted to participate in the match. All substitutes must be named on the team sheet following the tie.
19. Additional Concussion Substitutions

Each Team is permitted to use a maximum of one concussion substitute in a match, which can be a player who has previously been substituted and maybe used at any time, regardless of the number of substitutes already used.

A concussion substitute can be made:

- Immediately after a concussion occurs or is suspected;
- After an on-field assessment and/or off-field assessment
- At any other time where a concussion occurs or is suspected, including when a player returns to the field of play
- If a team decides to make a 'concussion substitution' the referee must be informed.

The player with concussion or suspected concussion is not permitted to take any further part in the match, including penalties (penalty shoot-out) and should where possible, be accompanied to the dressing room, medical facility or seek professional medical attention.

If a 'concussion substitute' is used, the opposing team then has the option to use an additional substitute for any reasons and at any time, in line with the existing laws of the game (again this can be a player who has previously been substituted) and may be used concurrently with the 'concussion substitution' made by the other team or at any time thereafter.

20. The home team must also provide at least 3 footballs that are 'fit for play'.
21. Clubs reported for late kick off will be fined the sum of £15.
22. Competition matches postponed on account of the ground conditions should comply with FA procedures. Should the ground be declared unfit it is the responsibility of the home club to immediately advise the visiting club, the Match Officials (if known) and the County FA (Monday to Friday 9:00am – 5:00pm via 01900 511800 or e-mail [CountyCups@CumberlandFA.com](mailto:CountyCups@CumberlandFA.com)). Notification of postponements after 5pm or during the weekend should be made to the County FA Officer on 07786 363035 followed up with an email to [CountyCups@CumberlandFA.com](mailto:CountyCups@CumberlandFA.com).
23. If, ahead of the fixture date the designated venue is considered unplayable then clubs are encouraged to, wherever practically possible, make alternative arrangements. The options available are:
- a) the 'home' team to find an alternative venue and inform the CFA and the opposing secretary of the new arrangements
  - b) Agree with The CFA and opposing secretary to travel to the opposing team's ground to fulfil the fixture
  - c) The CFA finds an alternative venue and will inform both club secretaries of the new arrangements
- Games cancelled due to ground conditions will be rescheduled for the following week at the home club's venue.
- If, after the second week, the ground is still not playable and there is no alternative arrangement, as stipulated above, available then the tie will be transferred to the opposing team's ground to fulfil the fixture. If, following this action, the game is once again cancelled due to ground conditions then, based on no alternative arrangements being available, it will be re-scheduled for the following week once again at the opposing team's venue.
- The CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee shall have the power to order a match to be played on a neutral ground or on the opponents' ground if they are satisfied that such action is warranted by the circumstances. Any decision made is final and binding.
24. The CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee shall review all matches abandoned and rule in line with FA regulations. Any clubs found to be in default of these rules may be subject to any action decided by the CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee.
25. Differently numbered shirts must be worn.

## Reporting Results

26. Within 2 hours of completion of the game, the home club secretary or a designated contact is responsible for notifying the result to the County Office. This should be done by the automated SMS service.

Where a text has not been received, or you have been instructed otherwise, clubs should ensure that the result is confirmed by sending an e-mail to [countycups@cumberlandfa.com](mailto:countycups@cumberlandfa.com)

Failure to comply will result in the offending club being fined £5. Clubs should also communicate the result of the game to their relevant league secretary.

27. Within 72 hours of the conclusion of the game (Sunday accepted), each club secretary is responsible for ensuring that the team sheet is fully completed on Fulltime or Match Day, including details of scorers, substitutions, referee's name, marks awarded, Respect marks, any cautions or dismissals highlighted against the player concerned and any other information requested. Failure to complete this within the allotted time, will result in that club being fined £5

[For Clubs not using Fulltime]

*For those teams at Step 4 and above and therefore with no registered players on Club Portal.*

Within 72 hours of the conclusion of the game (Sundays accepted), the electronic team sheet must be fully completed. Each club secretary is responsible for ensuring that the team sheet is fully completed. Failure to return the team sheet within the allotted time, returning the sheet incomplete or defaced will result in that club being fined £5

## **Referees**

28. All County Cup games must be officiated by a registered and appointed referee. The referee must have been approved by the CFA Appointments Officer or a designated Appointments Officer.
29. The match officials' fees will be £50, (where appointed, assistant referees' fees will be £30). These fees will be shared equally between both clubs with the club secretary of the team drawn at home being responsible for payment to the match officials as quickly as possible following completion of the game but no later than 30 minutes after this.

In the event of a match not being played because of circumstances over which the clubs have no control, the match officials, if present, shall be entitled to half their match fee.

30. A Referee not keeping their engagement must be reported to the CFA.

## **Protests**

31. Any protests must be received at the County Office within 72 hours of the completion of the game (Sundays accepted). These must be received in writing, signed and accompanied with a £25 appeal fee.
32. A Club that is expelled from the Competition may appeal in writing within 7 (seven) days against that decision to an appeal board comprising of 3 (three) Members of CFA selected by the Chairman of CFA or their nominee.

Any such appeal shall only be permitted on one or more of the following grounds:

- a) The CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee or appointed Sub Committee misinterpreted / failed to comply with the procedures relevant to dealing with the charge.
- b) The CFA Sanctions & Competitions Committee or appointed Sub Committee came to a decision on the facts of the case which no reasonable body could have reached; or imposed a sanction that is excessive.

Any appeal must be made in accordance with such procedures and appeal fee as may be determined by The Association from time to time.

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

## **Trophy**

33. The CFA shall present a trophy and medals to the winners and runners up (match day squad only) in the competition.

The trophy is the property of the Company and may never be won outright.

The Recipient club must sign an agreement with the CFA and shall be responsible for engraving their details on the trophy.

Any club not returning the Competition trophy by the due date, returning them in poor condition or without being engraved may be fined.