



GENERAL RULES TO APPLY TO CHALLENGE CUP COMPETITIONS FOR NON-CONTRACT PLAYERS

1. GENERAL RULES

The Cups, which shall not be won outright, shall be competed for annually.

The County Cup Competitions shall be:

- i. Saturday - Senior Amateur, Junior, Intermediate, Minor and Primary.
- ii. Sunday - Premier, Intermediate and Minor.
- iii. Women's - Challenge Trophy and Challenge Cup.
- c) Professional Clubs may enter teams in the Competitions subject to consent of Council.
- d) The Women's Competitions shall be competed for by teams competing in Step 2 and below of The FA Women's Football Pyramid.
- e) The County shall be divided into two areas:
 - i. That part of the County south of Thornbury.
 - ii. The rest of the County.
- f) Separate Competitions in each Class shall be provided in each area and the Competitions in the two areas shall be distinguished by the word 'South' in the case of (1ei) and 'North' in the case of (1eii).
 - i. Any reference in these Rules to "Cups Committee" shall mean Cups Committee (North) or Cups Committee (South) as appropriate to the competition.
 - ii. Any reference to "the Association" shall mean the Association's office and/or the Association's senior staff.
- g) A Club shall only be allowed to enter the Competition or Competitions provided for the area in which its' headquarters are situated, unless permission is granted by the Association or relevant Cups Committee.
- h) The Council may, at their discretion, divide the areas into districts and Clubs in such districts shall be drawn amongst themselves.
- i) Sectional draws shall be arranged so that the number of Clubs in each area shall be reduced to eight for the quarter finals.
- j) All fees and fines relating to County Cup competitions are set out in Appendix 1.

2. APPLICATION FORMS

Applications to play in all Cup Competitions must be made via the Whole Game portal or sent to the Association in writing by 30th June.

The Association or relevant Cups Committee will have sole power to include or exclude late applications for any of the Cup Competitions.

- i. No late application to enter any County Cup Competition will be accepted after the Draw for the first Round of the relevant competition has been made.

Affiliated Saturday or Sunday Clubs participating in sanctioned Leagues may only enter their teams in the respective Saturday or Sunday Cup Competitions. Other affiliated Clubs may make application for either Saturday or Sunday Competitions subject to the sanction of the Cups Committee.



The Gloucestershire Football Association (GFA) and/or the County Cups Committee may, at its discretion, accept an entry from any club whose parent Association is another recognised County Football Association and is in membership of the GFA, provided the assent of the parent Association is given. The GFA shall have the power to reject any entry as it sees fit or apply reasonable entry conditions. These may include, but are not limited to, requiring a club (at its expense) to play County Cup ties on the ground of its opponents.

3. ENTRANCE FEES

Each Club must forward to the Association, (on or before 31 July) an entrance fee according to classification. The entry fee for all open age (adult) Saturday, Sunday and Women's competitions are set out in Appendix 1.

4. PLAYERS

- a) Contract players are not permitted in these Competitions with the exception of 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.
 - i) No player registered with a Premier League or Football League Academy under the Elite Player Performance Plan contained within Youth Development Rules will be permitted to play in these Competitions.
- b) The qualification of a player shall be that he/she is a registered playing member of the Club at least seven days previous to the original date fixed for the playing of the match, except in special circumstances sanctioned by the Association or the Cups Committee. If the team is playing in a League affiliated to the Association, the player's registration number together with the date of his/her registration will be accepted as when the player became a registered member of the Club. If the team is not playing in such a League then the players must be registered with the Association.
- c) To be eligible to play in any Semi-final or Final Tie,
 - (i) he/she must have played in at least three (3) of the participating team's fixtures if 10 or less matches have been played or five (5) or more League or Cup games for the participating team if more than 10 matches have been played, except in special circumstances sanctioned by the relevant Cups Committee.
 - (ii) For the Women's Challenge Cup, players must have played in at least two (2) of the participating team's fixtures, except in special circumstances sanctioned by the relevant Cups Committee.
- d) The Club Secretary must send to the Association or relevant County Cups Secretary at least 14 days prior to playing its Semi Final tie, a list of registered players that may be eligible to play in the Semi Final/Final tie. This list must include the number of appearances each player has made for the team during the current season. Failure to provide the list will result in a fine.
- e) The relevant Cups Committee shall have the power to accept or refuse the registration of any Player.
- f) No Player who competes in any Association Cup Competition will be permitted to play in any other cup competition of a lower grade during the same season.
- g) No individual shall be allowed to play for more than one competing Club in the same Competition.



5. SUNDAY CUPS

A player having competed in a Sunday Cup Competition may not compete in a lower grade Sunday Cup Competition in the same season.

Any team entering The FA Sunday Cup competition will be placed in the GFA Sunday Premier Cup competition for that Season.

North and South sectional draws shall be arranged up to and including the Quarter Finals. Sections will be merged at the Semi-Final stage with one county-wide Final Tie being played.

6. SUBSTITUTES

In open age competitions, a team shall be permitted to use three substitutes in any one game from three players nominated to the Referee prior to the commencement of the game, except to replace a player who has been suspended from the game by the Referee.

A player who has been substituted himself/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.

7. SEMI-FINAL / FINAL TIES

The Association or the relevant Cups Committee shall take full charge of arrangements for the Final ties of all Cup Competitions and may take charge of arrangements for Semi Final ties of Cup Competitions which may include playing under floodlights.

The winners of either, the Junior, Intermediate, Sunday Intermediate, Minor, Sunday Minor, Primary or Women's Challenge Cup Competitions will be promoted to the next higher Competition for the following season, subject to the approval by the Cups Committee.

- c) The winners of the Senior Amateur Cup Competitions will be invited to enter the Challenge Trophy Competition the following season, subject to the approval by the Cups Committee.

8. METHOD OF DRAW

Teams, having been placed by the Association or Cups Committee in their appropriate Competitions, shall be drawn in couples. These couples shall compete with each other and the winning Clubs again drawn in couples and compete as in the first tie and so on until the final ties are played when the winning team shall hold the Cup for the current year. The Cups Committee shall have the power to make extra rounds, if necessary.

9. DATES OF MATCHES / FULFILMENT OF ENGAGEMENTS

Ties must be played on dates and venues fixed by the Cups Committee unless the Clubs concerned agree upon another date with the approval of the Association or appropriate Cups Secretary beforehand.

No club shall be allowed to postpone a match without the consent of the Association or relevant Cup Secretary, who may impose a fine for such postponement.

When a fixture is not fulfilled the Club responsible shall advise the appropriate Cups Secretary by telephone no later than 2 hours after the scheduled kick-off. Non-compliance shall result in a fine. The Club responsible shall also forward a statement giving reasons for non fulfilment. Such statements shall reach the Association or appropriate Cups Secretary within 72 hours of the original date/time of the fixture, failing which a fine will be imposed. The statement must be in writing, faxed or sent by e-mail. A telephone call is not sufficient.

Any team not fulfilling its engagement or withdrawing from a Cup competition shall be fined. In the event of a team withdrawing from a Competition prior to the completion of any



tie, the team it is drawn against shall be awarded a "walkover" and proceed to the next Round of the Competition.

The Cups Committee in all the above cases shall have the power to expel offending teams from the competition and alter dates as deemed necessary, subject to a written appeal to the Association in accordance with Rule 18c. Appeals must be received within 3 days of notification to the Club concerned, together with the appeal fee set out in appendix 1.

Any Club having two or more players selected to represent a Gloucestershire FA County XI (including Youth) shall be permitted, if it so wishes, to cancel the County Cup fixture on the date the County match is due to be played. Such cancellation must be made within 48 hours of receipt of notice of players selected.

10. NOTICE OF DRAW

At least SEVEN DAYS before the date of the match, the HOME Team must inform both their opponents and the Match Officials, of the situation of the ground, dressing rooms and Club colours in which their club will be playing. Failure to do so will result in a fine.

11. VENUE OF MATCHES

Subject to 9a, unless the consent of the Association or appropriate Cups Secretary is obtained all matches will be played on the ground (as defined on the County Cup Entry Form) of the team first drawn, providing the ground requirements meet the standard of the appropriate competition. In the event of a team not being able to play the tie on its own ground on the date fixed it must be played on the ground of its opponents, which with the exception of responsibility for payment of match official fees and expenses, shall be considered the Home team for the purpose of the match. Ties postponed too late for this arrangement to be carried out shall be played the following week on the ground of the team drawn at home unless an alternative venue is available on the original date. Clubs may play on a neutral ground that may include a 3G artificial turf football pitch, with the agreement of the Association or appropriate Cups Secretary. Clubs found guilty of failing to comply with these requirements shall be fined.

Teams, whose ground or changing accommodation fails to meet the requirements of the Association, may seek approval of an alternative ground for playing of their home ties with the Association or appropriate Cups Secretary.

- c) If the ground of any team shall be considered unsuitable for a Cup tie, their opponents may appeal to the Cups Committee, who may order the match to be played on the ground of the appealing Club or on a neutral ground, such appeal to be made not less than seven days prior to the date fixed for the round, or within three days of playing a drawn game.
- d) The HOME club shall provide two match footballs in good order and condition and approved by the referee. Clubs failing to do so shall be fined.
- e) Clubs drawn at home with floodlighting facilities may play under these conditions with the agreement of the Association or appropriate Cups Secretary.

12. DURATION OF MATCHES

Except for Final Ties, all open age matches shall have duration of 90 minutes unless a shorter time (**not less than sixty (60) minutes**) is mutually arranged by the two Clubs in consultation with the referee prior to the commencement of the match, and in any event shall be of equal halves. If at the end of that time the scores are level, the winner shall be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the relevant regulation as defined in the "Laws of the Game".

Should, at the end of play, the light, in the opinion of the Referee, be insufficient for the taking of kicks from the penalty mark, in accordance with the procedures defined in the



"Laws of the Game", then the match shall be replayed within seven days on the ground of the team club drawn last.

In postponed or replayed matches only those players shall be allowed to play who were eligible on the date fixed for the playing of the round.

13. RESULTS OF MATCHES

- a) The Secretary of each Club must send to the Association, to be received within 5 days of the date played, (i) the result together with first names and surnames of all their players and substitutes (if used) and Referees marks (if required), on the Official Team Sheet or, (ii) the result and names of all their players and substitutes (if used) and Referees marks (if required), electronically using FA Full Time. Failure to do so will result in a fine.
- b) Any Club not having submitted the information under Rule 13a and having received a request from the Association to respond within 7 days with the required information and fails to do so may be expelled from the Competition and charged with the failure to comply with the Rules of the Association.
- c) Any Club awarding the Referee a mark of 50 or less shall send an explanation according to the Guidelines to Marking Referees to the Association. Failure to do so will result in a fine.

14. CLUB COLOURS

Where, in the opinion of the Referee, the colours of two competing Clubs are similar, the away team must change its colours for the occasion, failing which a fine shall be imposed. In all matches under the control of the Association when the colours are similar both teams shall change.

In the event of a player not playing in the colour and pattern registered by the Club, a fine for each player will be imposed upon the Club.

No player including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts. Goalkeepers must wear colours that distinguish them from all other players and the match officials.

Players' 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 blood injury. The Captain of each team shall wear a distinguishing armband to indicate his/her status. Failure to comply will incur a fine as set out in Appendix A.

15. DIMENSIONS OF GROUND

Grounds for all Cup Ties must be within the dimensions laid down by The Football Association and marked in accordance with the Laws of the Game. Goal nets must be used in all ties.

16. KICK-OFF TIMES/TEAM SHEETS

Kick-off times shall be fixed by the Association or Cups Committee. An alternative kick-off time may be requested by the Home team, subject to the approval of the Association or relevant Cups Secretary.

Clubs responsible for a late start not exceeding 10 minutes shall be fined, plus an additional fine for every 5 minutes (or part thereof) in excess. If the Home Club is the defaulter the fine will be doubled.

Clubs must hand copies of a list of names of registered players taking part in the game (including the names of the nominated substitutes) to the Referee and a representative of the opponents in the presence of the Referee at least 15 minutes before the appointed time of kick-off. A Club failing to carry out these provisions shall be fined.



17. **MATCHES UNFINISHED THROUGH LATE START OR MISCONDUCT OR OTHER CAUSE**

In the event of a match (including during the series of kicks from the penalty mark) being unfinished through one team being late or owing to misconduct, the Committee shall have power to award the match to the opponents of the offending Club, or order the match to be replayed and take what action the Committee deems necessary.

If both teams should be guilty of misconduct then the Committee may expel one or both Clubs from the Competition or order the match to be replayed, the expenses of which shall be equally shared and take what action the Committee deems necessary.

When a first match has been postponed or abandoned before the completion of ninety minutes and neither club being at fault, it must be played on the same ground, on or before the following Sunday.

The Committee shall review all abandoned matches. In any case where it is to the advantage of the competition and has no injustice to either club, the committee shall be empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand.

Any match abandoned through the fault of the competing clubs, the Cups Committee shall take such action as they consider necessary. Such action shall be in addition to any disciplinary action taken by the County Association.

18. **DISPUTES, PROTESTS-PROCEDURE**

All question of eligibility or interpretation of Rules, or any dispute or protest whatever shall be referred to the Cups Committee whose decision shall be final and binding on both Clubs, subject to appeal in accordance with Rule 18c.

A scrutiny of the team sheets held by the Association can be made on payment of a fee. The search shall be confined to that particular match or players which may be subject of a protest. Every protest, which must be made in writing, in duplicate, must reach the Association or appropriate Cups Secretary within two (2) days of the match (Sundays not included) accompanied by a fee. If a protest is not upheld the fee will be forfeited to the funds of the Association unless otherwise ordered by the Committee. The Club losing the protest may be called upon to pay the expenses of the protest. Clubs forwarding a false team card will be fined.

Any appeal against a decision of the Cups Committee must be lodged with the Association within three (3) working days of issuing the notification of the decision causing the appeal, accompanied by a fee which may be forfeited in the event of the appeal not being upheld. Appeals shall be heard by a sub-committee appointed by the Board of Directors whose decision shall be final and binding upon all parties.

19. **OFFENDING CLUBS/PLAYERS**

Teams proved to have played an ineligible player or players shall be fined in respect of each player and will either be expelled from the Competition or the match ordered to be replayed. In the event of the latter, the portion of the gate due to the offending Club shall be forfeited to the Association.

Individual players found guilty of playing for a Club other than the one which holds their current League Registration, shall be fined and disqualified from all County Cup Competitions for the remainder of the current season.

20. **OBJECTION TO BE LODGED WITH REFEREE**

Protests relating to the state of the ground, ball, posts, bars or other accessories of the game must be made to the Referee before the commencement of the game and that to the interference by spectators or to weather conditions may be made to the Referee whilst the



game is in progress. The Referee shall have sole power in the matter. When a protest has been lodged with the Referee a copy must be sent to the Association or appropriate Cups Secretary and such protest cannot be withdrawn except by leave of the Association.

21. APPOINTMENT OF REFEREES

The Association, or in the case of late replacements the appropriate Cups Secretary, shall appoint Referees to act in all matches. Referees must report late starts.

Match Officials appointed to Final Ties will be expected to attend a County Cup Final Seminar. Non-attendance may result in the appointment being withdrawn.

Should the appointed Referee fail to attend, the Clubs may mutually agree on a substitute who shall have sole charge of the game and his decision on points of fact shall be final. This agreement to be sent to the appropriate Cups Secretary in writing with the Result Card.

In any match where the visiting team has failed to keep its engagement, the home team must pay the Referees fee and expenses as allowed by rule and make claim for this amount from the defaulting Club through the Association. Such claims, if approved, must be paid by the defaulting Club within 14 days.

In every case where a match is postponed, it is the duty of the Home Club Secretary to notify the match officials and the appropriate Cups Secretary as soon as possible.

If the Match Officials are not notified and they attend for the purpose of keeping their engagement, they are entitled to full fee and expenses.

If the Referee attends at the ground and the match is not played because of ground or climatic conditions he is entitled to expenses and half fee. The same applies to Assistant Referees, if appointed and present.

Should a match be started and abandoned for any reason, the Officials are entitled to their full match fee and expenses.

If the abandonment is caused by the misconduct of the visiting team the HOME team must pay these sums and recover from the offending team through the Association.

In all rounds preceding the Semi Final and Final Ties, Clubs must provide a Club Assistant Referee, failing which a fine will be imposed.

For fees appertaining to the Referee and Assistant Referees in County Cup Matches, please refer to the "Referees - County Information" section of this Handbook.

Match Officials appointed to a Final Tie may request payment of a match fee (including expenses) instead of a memento. Fees are set out in Appendix 1.

22. MATCH EXPENSES

The team drawn first shall be responsible for paying the match fee and expenses to the match official(s) either before or within 30 minutes of the completion of the match.

In all semi-final ties, the match officials fees and expenses shall be shared equally by the competing clubs and shall be paid prior to the match commencing.

- c) All Clubs shall meet their own expenses, and shall have no claim on an gate or collection.
- d) The Nett receipts of all matches played under the direct control of the Association shall be retained by the Association.

23. FINAL TIES, NAMES OF PLAYERS, PROTESTS

Teams must hand copies of a list of names of registered players taking part in the game (including the names of nominated substitutes) to the Referee and a representative of their opponents in the presence of the Referee at least thirty minutes prior to kick off. A team failing to carry out these provisions shall be fined.



All protests in final matches as to the eligibility of players (or any other cause not provided for in any other rule) shall be lodged prior to the conclusion of the game with the appropriate Cups Secretary or his nominated deputy.

24. CLUBS RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFE CUSTODY OF CUP

On confirmation of the cup winners, the Cup will be handed over to such winners upon completion of a signed agreement on the official form provided.

The winning Club shall be responsible for the safe keeping of the cup and its return in good order and in a clean condition before 1st March in the ensuing season to the Association's Headquarters. Failure to do so will result in a fine plus any expenses incurred by the Association in the recovery or repair of the cup.

Clubs must insure the trophy for damage or loss with an approved Insurance company.

25. MEMENTOES

In the Final Tie 18 mementoes will be awarded to each Team.

Mementoes instead of a match fee may be presented to the match Officials in the Final Tie. (Mileage expense payments will be paid in accordance with the Schedule of expenses).

26. ALTERATION TO RULES

The Cups Committees of the Association shall have the power to propose alterations or add to the foregoing Rules as from time to time they deem expedient. Such alterations or additions shall not become operative until they have been jointly agreed and subsequently approved by Council.

27. ARTIFICIAL PLAYING SURFACES

Football Turf Pitches (3G Artificial pitches) will be permitted in all Gloucestershire FA County Cup competitions providing they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's 3G Football Turf Pitch Register (<http://3g.thefa.me.uk>)

The Home Club is also responsible for advising participants of footwear requirements when confirming arrangements at least 7 days before the match or within 24 hours of booking the venue when hiring a neutral ground within 7 days of the match.

All clubs should be aware that matches played on 3G Football Turf pitches generally have site specific footwear requirements; only clean football boots with moulded and/or rubber studs are to be worn. No blades or metal studs are permitted. Flat-soled trainers are not recommended.

**APPENDIX 1** Open Age County Cup Competitions - Fees and Fines

Rule	Description	Fee	Fine
3a	Cup Entry Fees:-		
	Senior Challenge	£70	
	Challenge Trophy	£40	
	All other competitions	£20	
4d	Failure to provide list of registered players for Semi Final/Final Tie	£25	
9b	Postponing a match without consent		£25
9c	Failure to advise the Cups secretary		£10
9c	Failure to provide written reasons for non-fulfilment		£25
9d	Failure to fulfil a fixture or withdrawing from a competition:-		
	Preliminary / Round 1		£25
	Other Rounds		£25
	Semi-final / Final Tie		£100
10a	Failure to contact opponents / match officials		£20
11a	Unauthorised use of a neutral Ground		£25
11d	Failure to provide two match balls in good condition		£20
13a	Late result sheet / card		£25
13c	Failure to provide written reasons for a Referee Mark of 50 or less		£25
14a	Failure to provide a change of colours		£30
14b	Playing in unregistered colours		£5 per player
14d	Failure to comply with shirt numbering and identification requirements		£25
16b	Late Kick off:-		
	First 10 minutes		£10
	Each additional 5 minute period (or part)		£5
16c	Failure or Late presentation of team sheet		£10
18b	Protest fee	£25	
	Submitting false team card		£30
18c	Appeal fee	£25	
19a	Playing an ineligible player		£20 per player
19b	Playing whilst ineligible		£20
21i	Failure to provide an Assistant Referee		£10
21 l	Match Official Fees: County Cup Final option - includes travel		
	Senior Challenge - Referee	£55	
	Assistant/4 th Official	£40	
	Challenge Trophy - Referee	£50	
	Assistant/4 th Official	£30	
	Sen. Amateur & Sunday Premier - Referee	£30	
	Assistant/4 th Official	£25	
	Other Open Age & U18 Shield - Referee	£30	
	Assistant/4 th Official	£25	
	Other Youth - Referee	£22	
	Assistant/4 th Official	£20	
22a	Failure to pay the match official(s)		£20
23a	Late/failure to provide a team sheet in Final Tie		£10
24b	Failure to return Cup by due date		£30
24b	Failure to return Cup in a clean condition		£25