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# SENIOR CUP COMPETITION RULES

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***2023/24***

**1. NAME OF THE COMPETITION**

The Competition shall be called “The Lancashire Football Association Senior Cup Competition”.

**2. CUP OWNERSHIP**

- a. The Competition Cup shall be the property of the Association.
- b. The Cup cannot be won outright.
- c. The Competition shall be annual unless otherwise specified by The Council.
- d. The Association shall present the Cup to the winning Club, who shall be responsible for its return to the Association prior to leaving the facility on the same evening for safekeeping.
- e. The winning Club shall be presented with a replica Cup for keepsake.

**3. MEDALS**

- a. The Association shall present 20 souvenir medals to both competing finalists.
- b. Medals will also be presented to the Match Officials.
- c. When a Player or Club Official taking part is dismissed or ordered to leave the field of play for misconduct, the medal to which they may be entitled may be withheld at the discretion of the Senior Cup Competitions Committee (The Committee).

**4. CONTROL OF THE COMPETITION**

- 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 Association.
- b. The Committee shall have the authority to make, delete, and amend the rules for the organisation, control, and management of the Competition, as it sees fit.
- c. All Clubs competing in the Competition shall be bound by and comply with the Competition rules.
- d. The Committee shall have the power to exercise all powers 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 eligibility and qualification) which 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 Committee shall have the power to take such action and make such decisions, orders, and rulings and impose such penalties as it deems necessary. Following such procedures as it considers appropriate, decisions shall be final and binding on all participants, subject to Rule 20. In considering such matters, The Committee shall not be bound by any enactment or Rule of Law relating to the admissibility of evidence in proceeding before a Court of Law.

e. The Committee shall have the power to appoint a Sub-Committee, such as a Football Advisory Board (FAB) to exercise the powers of The Committee to expedite decisions to ensure the progress of the Competition.

f. Subject to applicable FIFA, UEFA, and FA rules or regulations, Clubs may enter commercial arrangements in relation to matches in the Competition, which do not in any way conflict with the commercial contracts and duties of Clubs. Clubs must indemnify the Association and its Officers, Directors, employees, and authorised representatives from and against any claims for direct or consequential loss or damage by any party to a commercial contract caused or otherwise attributable to any failure or breach by the Club to fully perform or observe to obligations and responsibilities under these provisions.

## **5. ELIGIBLE CLUBS**

a. Participation in the Competition shall be opened to Clubs whose First Affiliation is to the Association and who are eligible and approved by the Committee.

b. The Committee may reject the application of any Club to participate in the Competition at its entire discretion.

c. Clubs who choose not to play or fulfill their agreement to play, shall, in lieu of competing contribute a sum per Club, fixed by The Committee and paid to the Association for non-participation. The Association will invoice such clubs re amount payable with a date by which payment should be completed.

d. If a Club is removed from the League in which it is playing, once it has been accepted into the Competition, The Committee has the power to remove the Club from the Competition.

e. The Senior Cup shall be competed for annually by first affiliated Full Members or Associate Members of the Lancashire Football Association, who are members of the Premier League, English Football League and are approved by the Committee.

## **6. ENTRY DATES AND FEES**

a. Clubs wishing to participate in the Competition must do so by entering at the Affiliation stage, no later than 1<sup>st</sup> August.

a. Competing Clubs shall pay the required entrance fee prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of August deadline.

## **7. ORGANISATION OF THE COMPETITION**

a. The Competition shall be competed on a knock-out basis.

b. Only Clubs who are First Affiliation Members of the Association will be eligible to enter the Competition.

## **8. DRAW FOR ROUNDS**

a. The Teams shall be drawn in individual ties.

- b. The winner of each tie will proceed to the next round, until two Clubs remain to play the Final Tie.
- c. The Association will communicate details of each tie to be played throughout the Competition.
- d. They will also indicate the closing date for each round, which must be observed.
- e. In each tie, the game shall be played on the ground of the Club first drawn, unless otherwise mutually arranged, and the consent of The Committee obtained, subject as hereafter provided.

## **9.VENUE FOR MATCHES**

- a. A Club not having an enclosed ground, where gate money may be taken and not having obtained the consent of The Committee to the use of an alternative ground in accordance with rule 9 (c) shall play on its opponents' ground.
- b. No monetary or other consideration shall be asked for, offered, or paid in connection with negotiations for change of venue.
- c. Matches must not be played on a neutral ground without the permission of The Committee.
- d. The Committee shall have the power to order any match to be played on an alternative ground, or date if it is considered appropriate.
- e. A Club must have regular use of a ground where a charge of admission may be made.
- f. Changing and washing facilities must be separate for each Team and Match Officials.
- g. Separate toilets must be provided for changing rooms used by the Players and Match Officials, which are not available for spectator use.
- h. If the ground of the home Club is considered unsuitable for the tie, having regard to all the circumstances, the opposing Club may appeal to the Association within 3 days of the receipt of the draw. Such appeal to be accompanied by a fee of £25, which may be forfeited if the appeal is not sustained. The Committee will make its decision, which shall be binding to both parties.
- i. The payment of the Appeal expenses shall be at the discretion of the Committee.
- j. Each Club must take every precaution to keep its pitch in good playing condition.
- k. Where there is doubt relating to the fitness of the pitch for play, then a Referee of the level of the match must be brought in Where there is doubt, Clubs are asked to arrange an early inspection to prevent unnecessary travel.
- l. In the event of the tie being replayed by the order of The Committee, all expenses shall be paid for by the defaulting Club.
- m. Admission fees may be charged for each game. The Final Tie admission price will be determined by The Committee.
- n. Goal nets and corner flags are to be used in all ties. Failure to observe these requirements may result in a fine.

- o. Any Club refusing or failing to play the against the Club which it has been drawn shall, unless otherwise decided by The Committee will be adjudged to have lost the match and will be fined £50.
- p. The Club first drawn must communicate with the opposing Club to notify the location of the ground and other match details and notify The Association of its receipt within seven days of the advertised date of the tie.

## **10. CLUB COLOURS**

- a. Where the colours of the two competing Clubs are similar, the away Club must change, unless alternative arrangements are mutually agreed by the competing Clubs.
- b. Team colours must not clash with the Match Officials.
- c. In the event of Clubs not agreeing on the colours to be worn by their respective teams The Committee shall decide who must change.
- d. Goalkeepers must wear colours that distinguish them from all other players and the Match Officials.
- e. Duplication of shirt numbers/numbering is not permitted.
- f. Player's shirts must be clearly numbered and be in accordance with the team sheet handed to the Referee prior to any tie.
- g. There must be no change of numbers during the match except on a change of Goalkeeper or when a Player has been required by the Referee to change his shirt because of a blood injury.
- h. The captain shall wear a distinguishing armband to indicate his status.
- i. Advertising may be worn on the Player's clothing in accordance with the Rules of The Football Association.

## **11. DURATION OF MATCHES**

- a. The duration of each match shall be 90 minutes, with two equal halves of 45 minutes.
- b. The half-time interval shall not exceed 15 minutes.
- c. In the event of the score being level after 90 minutes, extra time will NOT be played.
- d. Late kick-offs must be reported by the referee to the Competition organiser within 48 hours of the completion of the game, giving full details for the reason for the delay to kick-off.
- e. The Final Tie may be played as a one-off game or on a two-legged basis as decided by The Committee in conjunction with the Clubs.

## **12. PROVISIONS FOR THE PLAYING OF MATCHES**

- a. Clubs shall not mutually arrange to play a match in lieu of a Cup Tie.
- b. In all ties, if the scores are level after 90 minutes, the tie will be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the procedure adopted by the International Football Association Board.

- c. In the event of a match being postponed due to the playing conditions, the Association must be informed as soon as possible, and the tie will be replayed on the ground on which it should originally have been played unless mutually agreed and approved by The Committee.
- d. If a game is abandoned and the designated time has not been played, the game must be replayed at the ground of the Club originally drawn at home if neither of the competing teams were at fault.
- e. If a game is abandoned due to misconduct, a decision on whether to replay the tie shall be determined after consideration of all the circumstances.
- f. Where the tie has not been completed within 14 days of the competition date, the Association shall find an alternate ground, unless mutually agreed upon and approved by The Committee.
- g. In the event of a club failing to fulfill a competition tie, the offending club will be fined £50.
- h. In the event of a club failing to fulfill a competition tie once agreed and set up by the county FA on full time, the offending club will be fined £50, and this will be put to the committee to look at whether the club will be expelled from the competition.

### **13. REPORTING RESULTS**

- a. Results must be reported via email or FA full-time to [Andrea.gratton@lancashirefa.com](mailto:Andrea.gratton@lancashirefa.com) within 12 hours of the completion of the tie.
- b. Team sheets listing players who played in the match and goal scorers must be submitted within 2 working days to the Association
- c. Failure to forward these details will incur a fine of £15.

### **14. PROVISION FOR STAGING THE FINAL**

- a. In the Final Tie, the choice of ground, shall be, chosen by The Committee.
- b. If the Final is postponed or abandoned, it shall be replayed as directed by The Committee.
- c. At least seven days prior to the Final Tie, a club representative of both competing teams must forward to the Association Secretary, a list of players from which the Team will be selected, and the colours in which they intend to play.
- d. Competing Clubs must settle all accounts with the staging Club or Organisation within 14 days of the match.

### **15. PROVISION FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM THE COMPETITION**

- a. Any Club intending to withdraw from the Competition after the affiliation process will be charged a fine of £50 will be incurred.
- b. Failure to comply with rule 15 (a) will be dealt with by The Committee who has the power to compel the offending Club to pay any expenses incurred and take any further action as deemed expedient.

- c. Failure to provide a satisfactory reason for their withdrawal may mean the Club will not be allowed to play in the Competition in the following season.
- d. The non-participation fee position will also be reviewed.
- e. In the Semi-Final and Final Tie, any Club failing to play may be adjudged by the Association to have been guilty of serious misconduct and liable to be dealt with by The Committee.

## **16. PROVISIONS CONCERNING QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS**

- a. All issues relating to the qualification of Player's interpretation of the rules or other matters in dispute shall be referred to The Committee.
- b. The Players shall be duly qualified according to the Rules of the Association.
- c. Clubs must play their best available team. This rule may be amended at the discretion of The Committee if the two competing finalists mutually agree it would be in the best interests of the Competition.
- d. A Player shall not in the same season play for more than one competing Club. Members of each respective Team may be changed during the series of matches.
- e. A Player must have been registered with his Club prior to playing any round.
- f. If the Committee has any doubts regarding the qualification of a player taking part in the Competition, it shall have the power to call upon such player or his Club to prove his eligibility according to these rules.
- g. If an ineligible player is played in the competition, The Committee may disqualify a Player from the Competition, order the game to be replayed, or award the tie to the opponents and/or impose such other penalties and decisions as it thinks fit. A fine may also be imposed on the offending Club £100.
- h. Trialists or loan Players are permitted to take part in the Competition.
- i. The names of all Players taking part in any game, including Substitutes and Technical Area occupants must be detailed on the Team sheet and must be signed and returned via email to [Andrea.gratton@lancashirefa.com](mailto:Andrea.gratton@lancashirefa.com) within 4 days of the match taking place.
- j. A Club may at its discretion use three Substitute Players at any time in a cup tie, except to replace a player who has been suspended from the game by the Referee after play has commenced. The Substitution can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the Referee has given permission. The Substitution is completed when the Substitute enters the field of play, from which moment he becomes a Player and the Player whom he is replacing ceases to be a Player.
- k. A maximum of 5 Substitutes may be nominated and they must be included on the official team sheet handed to the Referee before the match.
- l. A player who was not eligible for a tie that was postponed, but is then registered in time for the revised date, will be eligible providing that all other criteria are met
- m. Any Club found to have played an ineligible Player shall be fined up to £100 and expelled from the Competition.

## 17. DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE COMPETITION

The Committee shall have the power to disqualify any competing Club(s) proved guilty of breaching the Rules of the Association or the Cup Competition and the decision of The Committee shall be final and binding.

## 18. PROVISIONS CONCERNING MATCH OFFICIALS

- a. In all matches the Referee and Assistant Referees shall be appointed by the Association.
- b. A Fourth Official will be appointed for all Ties.
- c. In the event of any of the Match Officials failing to arrive or being incapacitated, the two Clubs must agree to a substitute official, providing one is available who is currently eligible to officiate in a League equivalent to the lowest level of football in which either of the two Teams participate.
- d. Such appointed Officials shall have the same authority as the original appointed Match Official.
- e. The fees and expenses paid to all the Officials will be met by the Home Club and will be a match expense.
- f. Match Officials shall be entitled to the following fees:

<i>Referee</i>	<i>Assistant Referees</i>	<i>4<sup>th</sup> Official</i>	<i>Travel Expenses</i>
£120	£70	£45	£0.40p per mile

- g. In the event of the match being played on a mid-week afternoon, the Officials are entitled to an additional £25 daytime allowance fee.
- h. If Officials travel and the game is not played, they shall be entitled to receive half their match fee and all traveling expenses.
- i. Match Officials shall acknowledge acceptance of appointments for all matches in the Competition to The Association.
- j. The Home Club **must** confirm all match arrangements with the Match Officials no later than five days prior to the date of the game.
- k. The duties of the Match Officials shall be as defined in the Laws of the Game.
- l. Match Officials may wear coloured shirts in this Competition in accordance with the following provisions:
  - i. Black shirts shall be worn wherever possible.
  - ii. There will be no designated colour for the alternative shirt. However, it must not clash with either Team's colours.
  - iii. With Teams unable to wear black or dark colours, when there are instances of a colour clash, the Referee must revert to their black shirt.
  - iv. When Assistant Referees and Fourth Officials are appointed, all the Officials must wear the same-coloured shirt.
  - v. Officials must always wear black shorts and black socks.



## 19. PROVISIONS CONCERNING PROTESTS

- a. All questions relating to the qualifications of Competitors, or issues relating to the interpretation of the Competition Rules shall be referred to The Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding. The Committee shall consider any such matter in such manner and following such procedures as it considers appropriate. The 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.
- b. Where a Club wishes to protest that there has been a breach of the Competition Rules by their opponents, such protest must be made in writing and must contain the particulars of the grounds upon which it is made. The protest must be received by The Association, accompanied by a fee of £25, within 7 days of the match to which it relates. The fee shall be forfeited to The Association in the event of the protest not being sustained. No appeal will be accepted against decisions made (pre, during, or post-match) by the Referee.
- c. The Committee may make such orders and costs as it considers appropriate in relation to any issue or protest referred to it. The Committee may make such orders as it considers appropriate as to the costs incurred by the parties or The Association.
- d. Any protest relating to ground, goalposts, crossbar, or other appurtenances of the game shall not be entertained by The Committee unless an objection has been lodged by the Referee prior to the commencement of the match and not later than one hour before the official kick-off time. The Referee shall require the responsible Club to correct the cause of the objection if this is possible without unduly delaying the progress of the match.
- e. Any protest relating to a player's eligibility must specify the names of the players protested against and be accompanied by evidence to justify the protest. Each Club may support its own case with witnesses.
- f. When a protest has been lodged with the Referee, a protest must be made to the Association and objections shall not be withdrawn except by Association permission.
- g. A Club summoned to attend a hearing regarding a dispute or protest may be represented by one of its members. A Barrister or Solicitor may represent a Club of which he/she is a member at the time of the alleged offense but otherwise only with the prior consent of the Association. Any person summoned to attend a hearing of a dispute or protest must attend personally and shall not be legally represented except with the prior consent of The Committee.
- h. Should The Committee subsequently discover that any rule or has, in its opinion, been violated by mutual agreement between the Clubs or others it shall be in its power to disqualify any such Club from further competing in ties or to order the match or matches to be replayed without any formal protest having been submitted. Clubs may also be disqualified from future participation in competitions.

## **20. APPEALS**

- a. A Club may appeal against any expulsion imposed on it by The Committee.
- b. An Appeal Board shall comprise of three members of Council, selected by the Chairman of the Discipline Committee, or his nominee. Any such appeal shall only be permitted on one or more of the following grounds:
  - i. The Committee or Sub-Committee appointed to consider the charge misinterpreted/failed to comply with the procedures relevant to the hearing of the charge.
  - ii. The Committee or Sub-Committee appointed to consider the charge came to a decision on the facts of the case which no reasonable body could have reached.
  - iii. The Committee or Sub-Committee appointed to consider the charge imposed a sanction that is excessive.
- c. Any appeal must be made in writing within four days (Sundays excluded) of the Club being notified of the decision of The Committee and accompanied by a fee of £25 which shall be forfeited in the event of the appeal being dismissed.
- d. Once in receipt of the appeal, the Association shall arrange a hearing to be held within five days (Sundays excepted) of its receipt. The decision of this hearing shall be final and binding on all parties and shall have no bearing on any other matters, including those of any disciplinary hearing.

## **21. FIRST AID**

It is the responsibility of the Home or Host Club to ensure that First Aid equipment, a stretcher, and a suitably qualified person to administer First Aid are available.

## **22. TEAM BENCHES**

- a. In all Rounds of the Competition, the number of Clubs Players and Officials seated on the team benches, in the designated technical area, must not exceed 8 unless the team bench facility provides more than 11 individual seats.
- b. Only one person has the authority to convey tactical instructions to the Players during the match. This person shall be the Team Manager or the Team Coach. He is allowed to move to the edge of the technical area to issue instructions to his Team but then must return to his position on the bench immediately after giving these instructions.
- c. All Team Officials and Substitutes seated on the bench shall be listed on the Official Team Sheet when it is submitted to the Match Officials. Only those persons listed on the Official Team Sheet shall be permitted in the technical area.
- d. The occupants of the technical area must always behave in a responsible manner. Misconduct by occupants of this area will be reported by the Referee to The Association, who shall have the power to impose sanctions as deemed fit.

e. With the exception of the Team Manager, the Team Coach, and any Substitutes who are warming up or warming down, all other personnel are to remain seated on the trainer's bench. The Team Manager or Team Coach is allowed to move to the edge of the technical area to issue instructions to his Team but must then return to the trainer's bench.

f. In the Final, Clubs will be advised by The Association of the number of Technical Staff and Substitutes who may occupy the team benches and a list of the permitted number of authorised personnel must be provided by each Club to the Referee at least one hour before kick-off.

## **23. NOTICES**

All notices required to be given to The Association by any of these Competition Rules shall be addressed to The Chief Executive, Lancashire FA, The County Ground, Thurston Road, Leyland PR25 2LF.