

Staffordshire FA



Rules of the
Challenge Cup

2017/18 Season

2016/17 Winners
Tunstall Town FC



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Rules of the
Challenge Cup
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This rule book contains the full Competition Rules for the Challenge Cup for the 2017/18 Season. The rules are broken down into numbered sections as follows:

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If you have any queries regarding the interpretation of any of these rules, then please do not hesitate to contact the Association directly during office hours (contact details below) for further guidance.

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1. Name of Cup

The Cup shall be called 'The Staffordshire Football Association Challenge Cup', hereafter known as 'Challenge Cup' or any other such name that the Competition may adopt from time to time.

2. Cup Ownership

- a) The Cup is the property of the Staffordshire Football Association, hereafter referred to as 'the Association'.
- b) When the winning club shall have been ascertained the President (or his Deputy) shall present the Cup to such club, which shall be responsible for its return to the Association on or before the first day of February in the ensuing year, in good order and condition.
- c) Should the Cup be lost, destroyed or damaged by fire or any other cause whilst under the care or custody of the club, the latter shall refund to the Association the amount of its current insured value or the cost of thorough repair, in addition to any other penalty that which the Association may impose.

3. Medals

- a) In addition to the Cup, the Association shall present medals to the players, substitutes and Secretary in the final tie.
- b) When a player taking part in the final tie is ordered to leave the field of play for serious misconduct, the medal to which he may have been entitled may be withheld at the discretion of the members of the Committee who are present at the final tie.

4. Control of the Competition

- a) The Competition shall take precedence over all other competitions with the exception of the FA Challenge Cup, the FA Challenge Trophy and the FA Challenge Vase, the Association's Senior Challenge Cup and the Association's Senior Challenge Vase.
- b) The ownership, organisation, control and management of the Competition shall be vested entirely and exclusively in the Association.
- c) The Council shall appoint a Committee ('Saturday Football Committee'). The Committee shall have the power to exercise all powers of 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 which shall be deemed decisions of Council and shall be binding on all participants in the Competition.
- d) The Committee shall have the power to make delete and amend rules for the organisation, control and management of the Competition as, from time to time, it deems expedient.
- e) All clubs participating in the Competition shall be bound by and comply with the Competition rules.

5. Eligible Clubs

- a) The Competition shall be annual, and be open to all affiliated clubs in membership of the Association, who are not accepted for the Senior Challenge Cup or the Senior Challenge Vase Competitions.
- b) If a club is removed from the League in which it is playing after it has been accepted into the Competition, the Committee shall have the power to remove the club from the Competition.

6. Date of Entry & Fee

- a) i) All clubs affiliated to the Association shall be entered into the Competition upon the completion of their affiliation.
- ii) The entry fee shall be £30.00 and shall be paid directly to the Association along with the affiliation fee.

7. Organisation of the Competition

- a) The Committee shall have discretionary power to grant exemption from earlier rounds of the Competition.
- b) i) The matches in all rounds up to and including the semi finals shall be played on conference dates, unless otherwise mutually agreed between the competing clubs and approved by the Committee.
- ii) All matches preceding the final tie shall kick off as follows;

First drawn clubs with floodlights:	3.00pm
First drawn clubs without floodlights:	(see below)
August / September / October:	2.30pm
November / December / January:	2.00pm
February / March / April:	2.30pm
- c) The names of the clubs entered for the Competition shall be drawn in couples. These couples shall compete and the winners shall be drawn and compete in the same manner. This shall be continued until the final tie of the Competition.
- d) After each draw is made notice shall be given to each club of the name of its opponent club and the date on which the match shall be played.
- e) The home club shall notify their opponents and the Match Officials, in writing or by means of electronic communication, five days before the date of the match, of the address and location of their ground and the colours in which they intend to play. The Match Officials shall acknowledge receipt.
- f) The Secretaries of each club shall send notice of the result with the names of the players competing on the form supplied, to the Association so that it is received within three days of the match (Sundays not included). Any club failing to comply with this rule shall be fined £20.00.

- g) Referees shall order matches to commence at the appointed time and shall report all late starts to the Association. The Committee shall have the power to impose a fine as it deems appropriate, not exceeding £20.00.
- h) The Committee shall have the power to disqualify any competing club, or player, or players of any competing club who are proved to be guilty of any breach of the rules of the Association.

8. Grounds for Matches

- a)
 - i) Each match shall be played on the ground of the club first drawn. If the ground of the first drawn club is not available on the conference date, other than due to adverse weather conditions, then the home club shall arrange an alternative ground or the match will be played on the ground of their opponents. In the event of neither ground being available, the match will be played on the ground of the first drawn club at the earliest opportunity prior to the next conference date. No monetary or other considerations shall be asked for, offered or paid with negotiations for change of ground.
 - ii) A club shall have regular use of a ground where charge for admission shall be made and the attendance shall be taken in all matches.
- b) The dimensions of the field of play for all matches shall be in accordance with the Laws of the Game. The playing area shall be enclosed and goal nets shall be used in all matches.
- c) Artificial football turf pitches are allowed in this Competition providing that they meet the required performance standards and are listed on the FA's Register of Football Turf Pitches. To meet the criteria a football turf pitch shall pass a test every three years as defined in the FIFA Quality Concept for Football Turf. The home club is also responsible for advising participants of the footwear requirements when confirming match arrangements in line with Competition rule 7(e).
- d) Dressing and washing accommodation shall be separate for each team and match officials. Qualified first aid personnel and suitable equipment shall be available at all grounds used for matches.
- e) If the ground of the club having choice of ground should be considered unsuitable for a match in this Competition, their opponents may appeal to the Committee. Such appeal shall be made within seven days of the draw, and shall be accompanied by a fee of £75.00, which may be forfeited if the appeal is not sustained. The Committee may order the match to be played on the ground of the appealing club, or on a neutral ground. The payment of expenses incidental to the appeal shall be at the discretion of the Committee.
- f) Each club shall take every precaution to keep its ground in playing condition, and if necessary, either club may request the Match Referee, or some other qualified referee, to examine the ground and decide as to its fitness for play in sufficient time to save expenses of unnecessary journeys being incurred by clubs. Subject

to this rule, the Match Referee shall have the power to decide as to the fitness of the ground.

- g) Except with the permission of the Committee, where a match is postponed in accordance with paragraph (f), it shall be played on the same ground fourteen days after the date of the original fixture unless both clubs mutually agree on an earlier date with the permission of the Committee. If the ground is not available on the fourteenth day then paragraph (a) shall apply.
- h) The Committee shall be empowered to order the match to be played as originally drawn or upon the ground of a neutral club or upon the ground of the opposing club.

9. Club Colours

- a) All players shall wear distinguishable colours. Where the colours of the two competing clubs are the same or similar, the visiting team shall change.
- b) Any objection to the colours shall be lodged before the match commences with the Referee, who shall have the power to order any necessary change.
- c) In the final tie the Association may order both clubs to change unless a mutual agreement is reached by the clubs.

10. Duration of Matches

- a) The duration of each match shall be ninety minutes played in two halves of forty five minutes. The Referee shall allow for time wasted or lost through accident or other cause. The Referee is the sole judge of allowance of time whether lost through accident or other cause, and his decision on this matter is not subject to appeal.
- b) The half time interval shall be fifteen minutes, and this may only be altered with the consent of the Referee.
- c) When a match has resulted in a draw it shall be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the procedure adopted by the International Football Association Board.

11. Provisions for the Final Tie

The Association shall fix the ground for the final tie and shall have direct control of the arrangements.

12. Provisions Concerning Players

- a) Each team participating in a match shall represent the full available strength of each competing club. If in the opinion of the Committee and the spirit of this rule has been broken they shall have the discretion to impose a fine and dismiss the club from the Competition.
- b) In all rounds of the Competition a player shall be a registered member of his club under the rules of the Competition.
- c)
 - i) A registered player is one who has either, in the case of a player under written contract registered with the Football Association, or in the case of a player without a written contract, registered with a league in which his club competes in the current season. Any such registration must have been received and accepted by The Association or league at least seven days previous to the date fixed for playing the round, and the registration must be continuous through to the date of the match. In order to be eligible for the final, the players must have been correctly registered and eligible for the semi final round of the competition.
 - ii) An International Transfer Certificate for players coming from overseas Associations (including Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland) takes precedence over a players registration. Therefore, this is also required by midnight on the Friday seven or more days previous to the date fixed for playing the round for the players registration to be valid.
 - iii) A player on a temporary (loan) transfer is ineligible to compete unless permission is given by the lending club in writing and a copy is submitted to the Association by 12 noon on the Friday previous to the week fixed for playing the round. A registered Trainee or a player on a Scholarship may only play for another club subject to written permission being given by the club he is registered to which must be received by the Association at least seven days prior to the date fixed for playing the round. The committee will not give permission for players on loan to play against the lending club.
 - iv) A player recalled, at any time prior to the date of the round, to his original club from temporary (loan) transfer, in accordance with the terms of the loan agreement, may represent his original club. Such player may only play in postponed or replayed matches if he had been recalled in time for the first match.
 - v) A player recalled, at any time prior to the date of the round, to his original club from temporary (loan) transfer, in accordance with the terms of the loan agreement, may represent his original club. Such player may only play in postponed or replayed matches if he had been recalled in time for the first match.
 - vi) Only players who have played (including having played as a nominated substitute) in an earlier round of the Competition shall be eligible to play in the final tie.

- vii) A player who during the current season has played in a match in the Football Association Challenge Cup, Trophy or Vase, or The Football League, or the Association's Senior Cup or Senior Challenge Vase, shall not be eligible to play in this competition.
- d) To play in this competition the player must have attained the age of 16.
- e) A player shall not in the same season play for more than one competing club, but the members of each respective team may be changed during the series of matches.
- f) A player who has been suspended may play in postponed, abandoned, drawn or replayed matches after the term of the suspension has expired.
- g) A club may nominate a maximum of five substitutes and who at their discretion may use three at any time in a match in this competition, except to replace a player who has been suspended from the match by the Referee. The substitution can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the Referee has given permission. A substitute who is not used is entitled to play for another club in the same season, subject to paragraph (b).
- i) Clubs shall complete a team sheet on the prescribed form (including the names of all players and nominated substitutes) and hand a copy of such team sheet to the Referee and a representative of their opponents at least thirty minutes before the advertised kick off time. Any club failing to carry out these provisions shall be fined £20.00.
- j) If the Committee have any doubt as to the qualification of any player taking part in this Competition, they shall have the power to call upon such player, and/or the club to which he belongs, or for which he played, to prove that he is qualified according to the rules, and failing satisfactory explanation the Committee shall disqualify such player and remove the club from the Competition, and impose such other penalty as they think fit.

13. Match Officials

- a) In all matches the Committee shall appoint the Match Officials, including a Reserve Official for the final tie.
- b) The fees of the Match Officials shall be shared equally by both clubs unless otherwise instructed by the Committee.
- c) The fees to be paid in all rounds up to and including the semi final shall be as follows:

Referee:	£32.00
Assistant Referee:	£24.00
- d) In the final tie, the Match Officials shall receive a medal and shall be paid travelling expenses of 40p per mile in respect of private car use.
- e) In the event of a match not being played the Match Officials shall be paid:
 - i) Half the fee to be shared equally by both clubs, if the Referee decides the ground is unfit for play.

- ii) Full fee if they travel to the ground and find one club has defaulted; the defaulting club shall pay the full fees.
- iii) In the event of a match being started and abandoned, full fee shared equally by both clubs.
- f) The Match Officials shall report to the ground at least one hour before the time of kick off.
- g) The duties of the Match Officials shall be as defined in the Laws of Association Football.

14. Protests

- a) All questions relating to the qualification of players, interpretation of the rules, or any dispute or protest whatever shall be referred to the Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding on both clubs.
- b) Every protest shall be made in writing and shall contain the particulars of the grounds upon which it is founded. Two copies of the protest shall be lodged with the Association accompanied by a fee of £75.00 within two days of the match to which it relates (Sundays not included). The fee shall be forfeited to the Association in the event of the protest not being sustained.
- c) The Committee may order any club engaged in a dispute or protest to pay such sum as may be considered necessary towards defraying the expenses incurred.
- d) Any protest relating to the ground, goalposts or bars or other appurtenances of the game shall not be entertained by the Committee unless an objection has been lodged with the Referee before the commencement of the match. The Referee shall require the responsible club to correct the cause of objection, if this is possible, without unduly delaying the progress of the match.
- e) When an objection has been lodged with the Referee, a protest shall be made to the Association and neither objection nor protest shall be withdrawn, except by leave of the Committee.
- f) The Association shall send a copy of the protest and particulars to the club protested against.
- g) Each club may support its case by witnesses.
- h) A member of the Committee who is in any way involved with a club concerned in a dispute or protest shall not be present at any meeting of the Committee while the dispute or protest is being considered.
- i) A club summoned to attend a hearing or a dispute or protest may be represented by one or more of its members.

15. Appeals

- a) A club that is expelled from the Competition may within seven days of receipt of written notification of the decision appeal against such decision by lodging the particulars in duplicate, accompanied by a fee of £75.00 which shall be forfeited if the appeal is not upheld. Any such appeal shall be addressed to the

Association for the adjudication of a Board of Appeal, whose decision shall be final and binding on all parties.

- b) A club may not appeal against any penalty imposed on it other than expulsion from the Competition.
- c) The Board of Appeal shall have the power to compel any party to the appeal to pay such expenses as they deem fit.

16. Proceeds of Matches

- a) In all matches prior to the final tie, the club having choice of ground shall pay the costs of staging the match.
- b) In replayed matches in consequence of a breach of rule, the gate proceeds shall be dealt with as the Committee may determine.
- c) In all matches the clubs shall be responsible for payment of their own travelling expenses.
- d) In the final tie the Association shall take the gate, and if the receipts are insufficient to cover the entire expenses of the match, shall stand the loss.

17. General

The Laws and Rules of the Association shall apply to this Competition, and the Committee shall have the power to deal with anything not provided for, including dismissal from the Competition.