

**NIBFA**  **NATIONAL**  
**YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

**LEAGUE RULES**



**Official League Sponsor**

**Season 2019/20**

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***NIBFA National Youth Football League***

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***Est. 2008***



AFFILIATED TO  
NORTHERN IRELAND BOYS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION  
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## **LEAGUE RULES**

### **1. REGISTRATION OF CLUBS**

All Clubs/Teams must submit details of their management teams in full as per application, any changes to the original details supplied must be notified to the league in writing or by email within two working days of such change.

### **2. ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION/DEPOSIT/PAYMENT**

- (a) The annual subscription of each club shall be determined at the Annual General Meeting.
- (b) In addition, each club shall deposit a sum of money which will be liable to forfeiture at the end of the season if a Club has failed to complete its League Fixtures or wish to leave the league without good reason or has debts outstanding to the league.
- (c) The deposit is recoverable by Clubs who wish to leave the league, have fulfilled all their league fixtures and have no outstanding debts to the league.
- (d) The annual subscription and the deposit (where not already held by the league) must be paid on application for membership no refund will be paid to any team who subsequently withdraws from the league after accepting a place offered.

### **3. LEAGUE FORMAT**

- (a) The league committee will determine the format of the league on an annual basis. Promotion and Relegation (if applicable) shall apply between the divisions of the League. As a minimum the bottom two clubs in Section A of a League shall be relegated to Section B and the relegated number replaced by clubs from Section B. However, in the case of any team with a secured place in any "A" division subsequently withdrawing from the league that team will take the place of the previously relegated second last team in the division. A second withdrawal from a secured place in any division will then be replaced by the third placed team from a "B" Division being promoted. The outcome of any other scenario within divisions will be determined by the league committee whose decision will be final. Depending on the numbers of applicants in any season the bottom 3 teams in selected B leagues may not have their place in the league renewed but may face exclusion or a play-off against a new applicant.
- (b) The league reserves the right to appoint the venue for all fixtures.
- (c) The team listed first will be designated the home team.
- (d) Three points will be awarded for a win and one for a draw.
- (e) In the case of an equal number of points being accrued the head to head results between the teams will be a deciding factor in all league competitions if still tied a playoff will be arranged.
- (f) Goal difference will not apply to league positions.
- (g) Play offs will only take place, where necessary, for league winners, runners up, divisional split or relegation.
- (h) Failure to participate in a play-off will incur forfeiture of the match, loss of deposit and a possible point's penalty for the next season.

- (i) Teams failing to complete a league season will have all previous and remaining results recorded as a 1-0 win to their opposition.

#### 4. AGE QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

All competitions will be open to players who meet the qualifying dates as stated on the league application form. Teams wishing to play female players (will be granted a concession of playing a female player in an age group 1 year below her date of birth across all age groups).

Also, and in exceptional circumstances **consideration** will be given to applications from young players with physical, sensory or learning disabilities to gain concession to participate in an age group of one year below their current age band. The procedure is as follows;

- (a) The player assisted by his/her parent/guardian seeks membership of an NIBFA affiliated member club.
- (b) The parent or guardian, with support from the club should then apply to NIBFA c/o National Football Stadium, Windsor Park, Belfast BT12 6LU, for a dispensation for the player to participate at a younger age group. This application must be supported with a letter from a relevant professional confirming clear and concise medical details and why they cannot play at their own age group e.g. Physiotherapist, School Teacher, Doctor etc.
- (c) The matter will then be considered by a panel consisting of members from Disability Sport NI, The IFA Disability Manager and a member of NIBFA. On reaching a decision the applicant, their club and league will receive a copy of the decision from NIBFA which will be final and binding on all parties.
- (d) If permission is granted, the club should then register the player. The registration form must be accompanied by a copy of the permission letter from NIBFA.
- (e) If the player moves to another league a copy of the letter of permission must be sent to the secretary of that league.
- (f) A club will only be allowed to make one such application per age group in any season.
- (g) If the player moves club's in season a new application must be submitted following the process outlined in Rules 5 (a) & 5 (b)
- (h) Any dispensation will be monitored throughout the season and may be rescinded

Any dispensation granted must be renewed annually

#### 5. REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

- (A) Player registrations **on COMET** can commence for all existing registered players from 1st June in any season. If not registered to their existing Clubs by 30th June in any season those players will be deemed free agents and free to sign for any club. Only players registered as confirmed to a club on COMET will be deemed registered. No protest regarding approaches from another club will be considered against an unconfirmed or unregistered player. All registrations at the league's discretion are subject to an administration fee of £1 per player to cover the cost of production of a league player ID card. No registrations will be carried out in the current season if any fees remain unpaid for previous season/s.
- (B) Player registrations close on 31st October and reopen from 1st January until 31st January in any season for transfer or the addition of registrations.
- (C) Players may be registered to any team in the League if not already recorded on the IFA Central Database or on the player registration list of any other affiliated league. It is the sole responsibility for each Team/Club to ensure that players are free to register. Letters from Parent/Guardians regarding a players' status will not be accepted.
- (D) Teams will be limited to registering a maximum of fifteen (15) players at U12 9-a side and twenty (20) players to any other age group in any season but in addition may call on players at any time from an age group below for purposes of player development. To facilitate this development opportunity, managers may include players from an age group below (but must also hold a valid ID card for the age group that the player will be representing). Any such player should be restricted to playing for those age groups either immediately 1 year or 2 years above the age group for which he or she qualifies. For the sake of clarity under 12 players will also be permitted to play at U13 & U14, an U13 player will also be permitted to play at U14 & U15 etc. In all cases it is the responsibility of coaches and parents to assess the player is physically capable of meeting the demands of an older age group. Teams who wish to move players between leagues must return the league ID card to the player's current league and have a new ID card issued by the League the player is moving to. If this process is not followed ahead of any player playing in a match the player in question will be deemed ineligible. ***Please note that any player needing to wear glasses will be required to use the appropriate prescription approved safety glasses.***
- (E) Players registering in the League for the first time must generate a COMET registration form when entering the players details. This form should then be scanned and uploaded as a document on the players active registration. When submitting the registration on COMET, clubs should upload a copy of one of the following under documents on the players active registration tab:
- A current valid Passport
  - A Citizen Card
  - Or an Original Birth Certificate

- (F) The club must also upload a headshot photograph of the player to accompany their registration on COMET for ID purposes or submit a Passport-size photograph x 2 to the league taken after 31st May in the current season (good quality) with players name and date of birth printed on the back. A re-registration period from 1<sup>st</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> June is available for all clubs to re-register their players who are a confirmed status on COMET. Clubs must receive consent from the players parents before doing so or the registration may be deemed invalid and removed from COMET.
- (G) The league will issue a laminated ID card for each player
- a. No player will be permitted to play in the League unless his Team/Club is in possession of a current season ID card for that player. Replacement ID Cards will be issued at a rate of £5 per card. If required a full team will be issued for £50, payments must accompany the requests, or the cards will not be processed
- (H) (1) Teams can transfer the registration of a maximum of TWO players to or from any other (NYL) League Team or Non - (NYL) League Team in any season.
- (2) If a Team seeks to obtain the transfer of a registration of a player from another Team, they shall first contact the Team holding the players registration (the transferring club) and request the consent of the transferring club to the transfer. If a transfer on COMET is not confirmed by the releasing club within 7 days, the League can action the transfer for the player to move after the 7<sup>th</sup> day has passed.  
Subject to the 2-player rule as per Rule H (1).
- If a player has not been released, they cannot take part in any club activities for another member Club. This includes training or friendly matches until the player registration is cancelled. If the transfer of a player is across different leagues an administration fee of £30 will apply payable to the new league registering the player. A league internal transfer will incur an administration fee of £20.
- The transfer of players will be subject to the transferring player having all payments / kit returns up to date with their current club, outstanding dues/kit returns will delay a transfer being processed.

(3) The consent referred to in clause in (5.H.2) shall not be unreasonably withheld. Any dispute in this regard must be referred to the league in writing, after investigation the league committee will make the final, binding decision on the matter.

(4) In the event of the transferring Club providing consent to the transfer of the registration of the player the transfer of registration must be completed on Comet.

(5) If a Club voluntarily chooses to release a player who is deemed surplus to requirements during the playing season, the club must contact the league to terminate the registration on Comet. Such player shall become a released player. Such registrations will be limited to the period up and including 31<sup>st</sup> January in any season.

(6) In addition to the registration of a player by way of a transfer as outlined in clause (5.H.1), a Club shall be free to sign a "released Player" subject the conditions laid out in paragraph (5.B. & 5.D.).

- (I) Players in the League will be permitted to register for their club if applicable to attain eligibility to play in the Northern Ireland Football League Youth League. Such players are only insured by the NIBFA insurance scheme when playing in matches organised under the jurisdiction of an NIBFA affiliated Youth Football League and competitions of the Northern Ireland Boys' Football Association.
- (J) On match days each Team must hold a Player ID card for all players listed on the match card. If a Team fails to produce their ID Cards on request prior to the commencement of any match by the opposing Team or match or league official/s that Team will automatically forfeit the match and will be responsible for all match expenses and shall incur a fine. However, if the requesting party agree to play the match in the absence of ID Cards the result of the match will stand as a valid result. Such situations must be verified by the match referee on the official match card or via disciplinary report sheets.
- (K) Any Team fielding an ineligible player will forfeit the match and be deducted a further 3 points and a monetary fine for each offence. Team officials will also be subject to relevant disciplinary procedures.
- (L) Clubs infringing registration rules may be reported to the Irish Football Association.
- (M) In all cases relating to the registration of players, Clubs are obliged to make initial contact with the Club of the player they wish to sign and not unsettle any player by use of peer pressure or any social media, including but not exclusive to, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, text or email. Failure to comply with the conditions laid out in this rule will result in disciplinary action.

(N) Clubs must respect the position of other (NYL) and non - (NYL) League teams and refrain from disrupting their season by unsettling players (this includes contacting a player directly via face-to-face meetings, phone calls, text messages and email/social networking websites). to sign players.

#### **OPEN TRIALS**

Many clubs now use Social Media to advertise and bring players to their clubs, many of these highlight that players need to get permission from their current club. That is not the case, the rule states quite clearly that it must be a club to club agreement. The rule is to standardise open trials and or training and avoid conflict and animosity between teams.

*As of the Second Monday in May annually, clubs will be free to arrange and players free to attend open trials and training without first seeking permission from their current club.*

*Players will not be permitted to sign for any new club before 1<sup>st</sup> July but clubs wishing to reregister their existing players may do so before 30<sup>th</sup> June.*

*Advertising of same must not commence before May Day Monday Bank Holiday in any season*

*Clubs who make trial arrangements before the above dates must submit a signed agreement approving participation for any player registered to another club in any league and submit copies of that agreement to the league/leagues of the clubs concerned. **See Template agreement (appendix 3)***

Any reported and subsequently proven instances that breach this process may result in the Club's ability to sign players being suspended and/or a league points deduction up to a maximum of 6 points.

(O) Anyone who, in football related activities, forges a document, falsifies an authentic document or uses a forged or falsified document to deceive in legal relations will be sanctioned within the disciplinary rules as are in place at the time of the offence. Disciplinary Rule 14.10, 14.11 & 14.12

#### 6. **MONITORS**

The League may appoint monitors to attend games who will have authority to check the ID's and registrations of players and officials. The monitors may prepare reports on the conduct and behaviour of players, officials and supporters at any match that may be used as evidence in any subsequent disciplinary proceedings.

#### 7. **FIXTURES**

(A) All matches shall be played according to the Laws of the Game as adopted by the Irish Football Association and updated 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019 but with the following qualifications;

Clubs will play two equal periods of not less than:

25 minutes duration for all 9 a-side games

30 minutes duration for U13s

35 minutes duration for U14s, U15s U16s

&17s

40 minutes duration

for U18

Match Ball - Up to and including U13 – Size 4  
- Under 14 to Under 18 inclusive – Size 5

Coaching/Management – Approved ID Badges issued by league must be clearly displayed by all staff involved with Team affairs on match day.

A Roped barrier must be erected for at least 25 metres each side of the half way line at every match, the exception will be venues that are already fenced off. Only coaching staff with the approved ID badges displayed will be authorised to be pitch side of the roped barrier.

A technical area marked by cones should be set out no more than 5 Metres each side of the half way line and a minimum of 1 meter back from the touchline. All coaching staff MUST remain within that area, except for player injuries or other unlikely events. Walking the touchline or encroaching onto the field of play will not be permitted. In instances where management are on the same side of the pitch that area should be a 10-metre space set out centrally in their half of the pitch.

- (B) All league fixtures will be available on the League website: [www.nibfanational.co.uk](http://www.nibfanational.co.uk)  
These games shall be played on the date stipulated unless changed by prior agreement. Changes to a fixture will require a minimum of 96 hours' notice and must be notified to and approved by the league in that time frame.
- (C) If a Club wishes to be excused from playing a game on any date throughout the season, the requesting Club must notify the league by phone/text and confirm in writing/email not less than fourteen days before the date of the fixture for consideration and decision. No team shall be allowed more than two reliefs of fixtures in a season.
- (D) In extraordinary circumstances, relief of fixture may be granted not less than five days before the date stipulated on application to the League. Any Club seeking relief of fixture less than five days before the date stipulated shall be responsible for any relevant match fees incurred by their opponents for the listed fixture on receipt of proof of such fees.
- (E) Any Club that cancels a fixture within 24 hours of Kick-off time will forfeit the match and all associated fees unless such a cancellation is in relation to a death of a club official, player or immediate family member of such official or player. All other forfeitures or non-fulfilment of fixtures will incur loss of deposit, and a possible additional points deduction in the current and/or following season.
- (F) Forfeiting a game as per 7E will incur a fine of £200. A second forfeited game for any team in same season will incur another fine of £200 and expulsion from the league for a minimum of two years. The club's participation in the league with other teams over this period will be

at

the discretion of the league committee.

(G) All Teams will be expected to arrive for their match at least 30 minutes prior to kick-off to allow for proper match preparation. Kick-off must take place no later than 20 minutes after the appointed time. However, if the Teams agree to play the match, outside of these time limits the result of the match will stand as a valid result and the defaulting team will incur no penalty. Such situations must be verified by the match referee on the official match card.

(H) In matches organised by the League, rolling substitutions will be permitted, in the following manner:

For all Teams participating in competitions of the League, any player who has been substituted, himself 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.

- Law 3—the Number of Players
- A match is played by two Teams, each consisting of not more than eleven players, one of whom is the goalkeeper. A match may not start if either Team consists of fewer than seven players. The rules of the competition must state how many substitutes may be nominated; for all matches organised under the jurisdiction of the LEAGUE 5 (five) substitutes may be used.
- All Matches—in all matches, the names of the substitutes must be given to the referee prior to the start of the match. Substitutes not so named may not take part in the match.

(I) Substitution Procedure — to replace a player by substitution, the following conditions must be observed:

- The referee is informed before any proposed substitution is made.
- A substitute only enters the field of play after the player being replaced has left and after receiving a signal from the referee.
- A substitute only enters the field of play at the halfway line and during a stoppage in the match.
- A substitution is completed when a substitute enters the field of play. From that moment, the substitute becomes a player and the player he has replaced is now a substitute.

- All substitutes are subject to the authority and jurisdiction of the referee, whether called upon to play or not.

Changing the Goalkeeper — any of the other players may change places with the goalkeeper, provided that:

- The referee is informed before the change is made.
- The change is made during a stoppage in the match.

Infringements/Sanctions — if a substitute enters the field of play without the referee's permission:

- Play is stopped.
- The substitute is cautioned, shown the yellow card and required to leave the field of play.
- Play is restarted with an indirect free kick at the place the ball was located when play was stopped.

If a player changes places with the goalkeeper without the referee's permission before the change is made:

- Play continues.
- The players concerned are cautioned and shown the yellow card when the ball is next out of play.

For any other infringements of this Law:

- The players concerned are cautioned and shown the yellow card.

Restart of Play — if play is stopped by the referee to administer a caution:

- The match is restarted by an indirect free kick, to be taken by a player of the opposing team from the place where the ball was located when play was stopped.

Players and Substitutes Sent Off — A player who has been sent off before the kick-off may be replaced only by one of the named substitutes. A named substitute, who has been sent off, either before the kick-off or after play has started, may not be replaced.

In all matches Clubs may play 5 substitutes from 5 named substitutes

- (J) The Home or First Named Team Club must telephone the League/Fixtures Secretary the result of all cup ties and League Matches played or unplayed before 6pm on match day and not later than 10.30pm for mid-week games. Clubs failing to comply with this rule will be fined £5 per offence. All managers will be expected to use the SMS results service.

No club, player or registered club representative shall be permitted to take part or be involved in any other match or competition which is not authorised by the Northern Ireland Boys F.A.

#### **8. VENUE & NOTIFICATION**

In the event of the league appointing a match venue the notification of the venue will appear on the website fixture list. If a Club makes a venue booking, then the league and travelling Club MUST be notified as soon as possible before the scheduled date for the fixture to enable the website notices to be verified or updated.

Clubs who are not familiar with the location of any venue should contact the home or first named Team for directions and any other relevant details. The League will have the power to decide whether facilities are suitable for matches in the competition and to order the Club concerned to play its fixtures on another ground. The League reserves the right to move any game to a neutral venue. Match kick-off times will be fixed by agreement of the home Team and the Fixtures Secretary. Times for kick-offs shall be determined by the league and the availability of facilities.

In all matches played under the jurisdiction of the league the accommodating authority or home team will try to ensure that suitable changing accommodation facilities are available for all teams. The home or first named Team will be responsible for the provision of at least two quality match footballs of appropriate size as described in Rule 7(a).

In a Cup fixture the home club secretary MUST inform the opposition within the specified time of venue and all other relevant details.

#### **9. REFEREES**

Appointed referees will be advised by the Referees' Co-ordinator of the necessary match details, location and kick-off time. Where referees are appointed by the league no Club may object to any referee so appointed. Where a referee fails to attend the Teams will toss a coin for the appointment of an official. This applies to all League competitions.

Referee's Fee:

- (a) the referee's fee shall be decided by the Annual General Meeting and shall be shared equally by both Clubs. The fee shall be paid prior to kick off and it is the responsibility of each team to approach the referee. Failure to pay before kick-off will result in a fine of £15.
- (b) In the case of non-fulfilment of any fixture, except under (c) below, the Home or First named Team shall pay the referee's fee, which shall be recoverable from the defaulting club should that not be the home or first named Team.
- (c) Should a ground be considered unplayable, the referee shall after confirmation of the same with the local authority representative, grounds man or other club appointee

responsible for grounds maintenance, receive half fee which shall be shared equally by each club.

10. **COLOURS**

- (a) Each Team in the league shall register its colours on a kit approval form as provided by the league. Clubs must not use kit branded with any form of Alcohol, Tobacco or gambling promotion logo.
- (b) In the event of a clash of colours the visiting Team shall play in their registered colours and the Home or first named Team shall change unless mutually agreed.

11. **MATCH CARDS**

- (a) In all matches a match card must be submitted to the referee ahead of the game. The team manager or if absent his/her agent will be responsible for PRINTING CLEARLY the full name of the player against the shirt number to be worn, NO player can enter the field of play with an unnumbered shirt and no team will be permitted to use players with the same numbered shirt. If this occurs, the errors MUST be corrected, the match card noted and updated if any new shirt/s are provided. When making substitutions, players are not permitted to use the shirt of a substituted player when entering the field of play. Such players will be deemed ineligible
- (b) For each match a Team may list up to Sixteen Players.
- (c) Match Cards must be signed by an official of each Club. The date of the match and the match result must be noted on the match card.
- (d) All dismissals and cautions must be noted on the match card by the referee. ***In addition, all dismissals must be reported by an official of the dismissed players/officials Team via the appropriate contact number listed on the match card within 24 hours of the match. Contact by telephone, email or text must include full detail of the offence, name of player/official and if player the shirt number. The information should also include the date, time, venue and opposition. ALL dismissals must be reported even in cases where the referee later indicates he may have made an error.***
- (e) All match cards will be subject to scrutiny by League Officials.
- (f) A Team official of the WINNING TEAM must forward the match card to the address notified on the card, or, in the event of a draw the HOME or FIRST NAMED TEAM has the responsibility. The match card must be forwarded to the league within 48 hours of the match it relates to (Sundays excluded).
- (g) Proof of postage or delivery (signed receipt) of each match card must be retained for the duration of the season and produced on request.
- (h) In the event of no proof of postage or signed delivery receipt and no receipt of match card, the league reserves the right to investigate the circumstances, suspend the result and or make points deduction. The league also reserves the right to determine the outcome of knock out competition fixtures.

- (i) Failure of Clubs to comply with this rule will result in a fine of £10 for each error on the match card or non-receipt of the match card by the due date, to be imposed on a monthly basis. The League may impose additional fines for persistent offences.

12. **UNFINISHED GAMES**

- (a) Results for matches that are abandoned because of inclement weather having played a

minimum of 80% of the scheduled time of the match will stand.

- (b) The status of matches that are abandoned because of inclement weather having played less than 80% of the scheduled time will be decided by The

League.

- (c) The status of all other matches that are abandoned or unfinished shall be determined by The League with reference to Disciplinary Code Rule 20

13. **MATCH POSTPONEMENTS**

- (a) Where venues have been appointed by the League in conjunction with a local authority it will be the final decision of the local authority as to the fitness of the ground for play.

- (b) In cases where the Home Team has a registered venue not owned or controlled by local authority it will be the decision of the Home Team grounds man or other club appointee responsible for grounds maintenance in the first instance to decide on the fitness of the ground for play or failing such then the decision of the referee will be final. The league will have the right to appoint a venue in the event of a "Home" venue not being available.

- (c) The home Club must immediately inform the league, Referee and Visiting Club if a postponement is

necessary, in default of which the Home Club may at the discretion of the league be required to pay

half of the referee's match fee and the travelling expenses, in whole or part of the Visiting Club.

- (d) The reason for the non-fulfilment of any fixture shall be investigated by the League and if the reasons are deemed to be unsatisfactory, the defaulting club may forfeit the points

and

pay the referee's fee, in addition, a fine not exceeding £50 (Fifty Pounds) may be imposed, the whole or part of which may be awarded to the aggrieved club. All fines imposed under this rule must be paid to the League within 14 days from receipt of defaulting letter.

14. **MATCH PRIORITY**

Competitions of the NIBFA shall have precedence over all other League competitions and any postponed fixtures are to be rearranged subject to the 14-day notification rule of

NIBFA to the

league.

15. **REPRESENTATIVE GAMES**

- (a) The League shall have the power to select player/s from any Team, to represent the league.

Such representation shall be on a voluntary basis and no penalty for non-participation shall ensue.

- (b) A team may apply for a postponement of a league fixture should two or more players including (a goalkeeper) be selected to play in a League, NIBFA or IFA representative game.

16. **LEAGUE TROPHIES**

Trophies for the League Championship shall be presented to the respective winners. In the League the maximum number of medals that will be issued to any team will be limited to 20 unless the actual number of players registered is less than twenty (20). In competitions other than the league championship a trophy and (20) medals will be awarded to the winners unless the actual number of players registered is less than twenty and (20) medals will be awarded to the runner up unless the actual number of players registered is less than twenty.

17. **CUP, PLATE & SUPPLEMENTARY COMPETITIONS**

- (a) The League rules shall apply with the following additions and amendments.
- (b) Competitions will be played on the "Cup-tie", Home and Away, sectional, or other principle as may be determined by the committee. When played on a "Cup-tie" principle, Clubs first drawn shall have the choice of ground or as determined by the League, except in final ties which will be played on grounds selected by the League Committee. In the event of the score being level in any cup-tie after the stipulated playing time has been completed, extra time will be played.  
Should the score remain level after the stipulated period of extra time is completed then the result of the tie will be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the "Laws of the Game".
- (c) Any Club refusing or failing to play the Club against which it is drawn within the time notified to it, and without enough reason for doing so, shall be liable for disqualification.
- (d) Any Club intending to forfeit a game must give notice to the Secretary of the opposing Club and the Fixtures Secretary at least three days before the date of the tie. The defaulting Club may be liable for the expenses of the tie and be subject to further sanctions including expulsion from the League.
- (e) The League Committee shall fix the venue for the final tie and shall have direct control of all arrangements, receipts and donations made from funds raised in connection therewith.
- (f) No player shall play for more than one Club in a cup or plate competition during any one season and this rule shall also apply to any supplementary competition irrespective of any transfer made in season.

- (g) In all cup-tie matches the duration of play is as defined in Rule 7 (a) for the age group concerned. In 9 aside competition no extra time will be played except for semi-final and final ties which will have 5 minutes way extra time in all other cases the duration of extra time shall be two periods of not less than 10 minutes.

In the event of a tie in a league format cup competition then the outcome will be determined by head to head results and if still equal a play-off will be arranged. In all League Cup, Plate/Shield or Supplementary competitions where a postponement occurs, the Team drawn at home initially will have the opportunity to arrange the game on one further occasion thereafter the away team will, in conjunction with the league, facilitate the tie. Each switch of responsibility will permit Teams two opportunities to host the game.

In all matches a completed match card must be submitted to the referee prior to the commencement of the match. For each match a Team may list up to Sixteen Players. Match Cards must be signed by an official of each club, please refer to Rule 11a. All match cards will be subject to scrutiny by League Officials.

A team official of the WINNING TEAM must forward the match card to the address notified on the card within 48 hours (Sundays excluded). Proof of postage of each match card must be retained for the duration of the season and produced on request.

Failure of Clubs to comply with this rule will result in a fine of £10 for each error on the match card or non-receipt of the match card by the due date to be imposed on a monthly basis.

In all matches up to and including Under 18 level Clubs may play 5 substitutes from up to 5 players named as substitutes on the match card

- (h) All cup-ties will be played to a finish at the first time of asking.

## 18 **BREACH OF LEAGUE RULES**

Any breach of League rules may render the player, official or Club liable to censure, fine or suspension or a combination of such penalties as the league deem fit to impose.

## 19. **SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY & PROCEDURES**

Please refer to appendices 1 & 2.

NIBFA and the league recommend that all clubs act to cease repetitive training techniques for heading a football for players aged 11 years and younger.

It is accepted that in a training/match situation heading a football is a potential consequence of any passage of play. This recommendation seeks to address concerns that repetitive heading practice may potentially have a long-term adverse effect on the brain.

20. **INTERPRETATION**

The League committee shall be the final authority of the interpretation of the Rules, decisions upon questions of interpretation and on matters affecting the league not provided for by the Rules shall be final and binding on all members.