

**STANDARD SECURITY BLYTH & WANSBECK**

**SUNDAY FOOTBALL LEAGUE**

**STANDARD CODE OF RULES**

**SEASON 2011 / 2012**

## **NOMENCLATURE AND CONSTITUTION**

1. (A) This Competition shall be designated the BLYTH & WANSBECK SUNDAY FOOTBALL LEAGUE and known as the STANDARD SECURITY BLYTH & WANSBECK SUNDAY FOOTBALL LEAGUE and shall consist of not more than sixty four (64) Clubs approved by the sanctioning authority.

All such Member Clubs must be affiliated to an affiliated County Football Association and their names and particulars shall be returned annually by the appointed date on the Form "D" to the Northumberland County Football Association. Failure to provide details by 1<sup>st</sup> June each year by any member club will result in a fine of £10 being imposed by the League. The area covered by the Competition Membership shall be those whose grounds are within a radius not exceeding 20 miles of Blyth Town Centre.

This Competition shall apply annually for sanction to the Northumberland Football Association and the constituent teams of Member Clubs may be grouped in divisions, *each not exceeding sixteen (16) in number.*

*This Competition wishes to become a designated Charter Standard League. Existing Member Clubs have two years (until the end of the 2012-13 season) to achieve the Charter Standard club award or face expulsion from the League. New Member Clubs have one year to achieve the Charter Standard club award. The League has the right to refuse membership to a Club if it fails to demonstrate commitment to achieving the award.*

*This Competition and its Clubs shall support the FA's Respect programme. As such it recognises that everyone in football has a collective responsibility to create a fair, safe and enjoyable environment in which the game can take place. A Respect League values the contribution of match officials, players and spectators and ensures that they are treated with courtesy and fairness by opposing players, club officials and spectators. The League and its Clubs will seek to play fixtures in a fair, competitive but not antagonistic environment.*

*Member Clubs shall not enter any of their teams playing in the Competition in any other Competitions (with the exception of F.A. and County F.A. Competitions) except with the written consent of the Management Committee of the Competition.*

(B) *At the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting called for the purpose, a majority of the delegates present shall have power to decide or adjust the compilation of the divisions at their discretion. When necessary this Rule shall take precedence over Rule 12.*

## **ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION, DEPOSIT**

2. (A) Applications by Clubs for admission to this Competition must be made in writing to the Secretary with an entry fee of £20. This to be returned in the event of non-election.

At the discretion of a majority of the accredited voting members present applications, of which due notice has been given, may be received at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

When Rule 12(B) is applied or a team seeks a transfer or is compulsorily transferred to another division no Entry Fee shall be payable.

(B) The Annual Subscription shall be £55 per *Team* payable on or before the date of the annual general meeting in each year.

(C) Each Club shall *on the day of* election pay a Deposit of £100 which shall be returnable to Clubs on leaving the Competition provided they have fulfilled their fixtures and complied with all orders of the Management Committee.

(D) A Club shall not participate in this Competition until the Deposit has been paid.

(E) Clubs must advise annually to the Secretary in writing by the 30<sup>th</sup> April of its Northumberland County Football Association affiliation number for the forthcoming Season, *failing which they shall be fined* £10. Clubs must advise the Secretary in writing, or on the prescribed form, of details of its Headquarters, Officers and any other information required by the Competition.

## **OFFICERS**

3. The Officers of the Competition shall be the Chairman, Vice-chairman, Treasurer, General League Secretary, and Management Committee Member who will be determined by the Annual General Meeting and elected thereat. (*N.B.* Auditors/Verifiers are not Officers).
- (A) The competition may honour anyone to the position of President/Vice President at the AGM providing notice has been given. Voting shall be decided by a majority of the Officers and Member Clubs present. The honoured recipient must agree to carry out social tasks as required by the Management Committee. Each member Club must have at least one Club member to act on their behalf at all League meetings. The Club member will be responsible for conveying all relevant matters to the member club Secretary to ensure the efficient running of the League. Member clubs failing to be represented at a League meeting shall be fined £20.

## **MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION**

4. (A) The Competition shall be governed in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association by a Management Committee comprised of the Officers and up to 10 (ten) members who shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting. All Participants shall abide by The Football Association Regulations for Safeguarding Children as determined by The Association from time to time.
- (B) Retiring Officers shall be eligible to become candidates for re-election without nomination. All other candidates for election as Officers or Members of the Management Committee shall be nominated to the Secretary in writing, signed by the Secretaries of two Member Clubs, not later than 21 days prior to the date of the annual general meeting in each year. Names of the candidates for election shall be circulated with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. In the event of there being no nomination in accordance with the foregoing for any office, nominations may be received at the Annual General Meeting
- (C) The Management Committee shall meet monthly to deal with business as it arises. On receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds of the Members of the Management Committee the Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Committee.
- (D) Except where otherwise mentioned all communications shall be addressed to the Secretary who shall conduct the correspondence of the Competition and keep a record of its proceedings.
- (E) All communications received from Clubs must be conducted through their nominated Officers.

## **POWERS OF MANAGEMENT**

5. (A) The Management Committee may appoint sub-committees and delegate such of their powers as they deem necessary. *The decisions of all sub- committees shall be reported to the Management Committee for ratification. The Management Committee shall have power to deal only with matters within the Competition and not for any matters of misconduct that are under the jurisdiction of the Football Association or affiliated Association*
- (B) Subject to the permission of the Northumberland County Football Association having been obtained the Management Committee may order a match or matches to be played each season, the proceeds to be devoted to the funds of the Competition and, if necessary, may call upon each Club (including any Club which may have withdrawn during the season) to contribute equally such sums as may be necessary to meet any deficiency at the end of the season. (See Rule 6(e)).

(C) Each Member of the Management Committee shall have the right to attend and vote at all Management Committee Meetings and have one vote thereat, but no Member shall be allowed to vote on any matters directly appertaining to such Member or to the Club so represented or where there may be a conflict of interest. (This shall apply to the procedure of any sub-committee).

In the event of the voting being equal on any matter, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.

(D) The Management Committee shall have powers to apply, act upon and enforce the Rules of the Competition and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Competition, including any not provided for in the Rules.

With the exception of Rules 5(i), 6(h), 11 and 19, for all breaches of Rule a formal written charge must be issued. The respondent shall be given seven days from the date of notice to reply to the charge and given the opportunity to:-

- (i) Accept or deny the charge
- (ii) Submit in writing a case of mitigation, or
- (iii) Put their case before the Management Committee.

Except where these Rules provide for the imposition of a set penalty any Club, Club Official (limited to Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer) or Player alleged to be in breach of a Competition Rule must be formally charged in writing and given the opportunity to present their case before the Management Committee. Financial penalties can only be imposed if included within the set penalties for breaches of Competition Rules. All breaches of the Laws of the Game, Rules and Regulations of The Football Association shall be dealt with in accordance with F.A. Rules by the appropriate Association.

With the exception of Clubs playing at Step 7 of the Football Pyramid and the FA Women's Premier League, the maximum fine permitted for any breach of a Competition rule is £250 and, when setting any fine, the Competition must ensure that the penalty is proportional to the offence, taking into account any mitigating circumstances.

(E) All decisions of the Management Committee shall be binding subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 16.

Decisions of the Management Committee must be notified in writing to those concerned within seven (7) days.

(F) Five (5) Members of the Management Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Management Committee and three (3) Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by any sub-committee of the Competition.

(G) The Management Committee, as it may deem necessary, shall have power to fill in an acting capacity, any vacancies that may occur amongst their number.

(H) A Club having failed to comply with an order or instruction of the Management Committee, or failing to satisfactorily attend to the business and/or the correspondence of the Competition, shall be liable to be fined or otherwise penalised at the discretion of the Management Committee.

(I) All fines and charges shall be paid within 14 days of the date of posting of the written notification.

Any Club failing to do so, will be fined a maximum of £50. Further failure to pay the fine including the additional sum within 14 days will result in fixtures being withdrawn until such time as the outstanding payments are settled.

*(J) A member of the Management Committee appointed by the Competition to attend a meeting or match may have any expenses incurred refunded by the Competition.*

(K) The Management Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the Competition between the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting called to decide the constitution and the commencement of the Competition season.

(L) The business of the Competition as determined by the Management Committee *may* be transacted by electronic mail or facsimile.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

6. (A) The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than the third Monday in June in each year. At this meeting the following business shall be transacted provided that at least two thirds of the Members are present and entitled to vote:-

- (i) To receive and confirm the Minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting.
- (ii) To consider any business arising there from.
- (iii) To receive and adopt the Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts.
- (iv) Election of Clubs to fill vacancies (as recommended by the Management Committee).
- (v) Constitution of the Competition for ensuing season.
- (vi) Election of Officers and Management Committee.
- (vii) Appointment of Auditors.
- (viii) Alteration of Rules, if any (of which notice has been given).
- (ix) Fix the date for the commencement of the season and kick off times applicable to the Competitions.
- (x) Other business of which due notice shall have been given and accepted as being relevant to an Annual General Meeting.

(B) A signed copy of the *verified* Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts shall be sent to the Northumberland County Football Association within fourteen days of its adoption by the Annual General Meeting.

(C) Each *Member Club* shall be empowered to send three delegates to an Annual General Meeting. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only. Fourteen days' notice shall be given of any Meeting.

(D) Clubs who have withdrawn their Membership of the Competition during the season being concluded or who are not continuing Membership shall be entitled to attend but shall vote only on matters relating to the season being concluded. *This provision will not apply to Clubs expelled in accordance with Rule 17.*

(E) All voting shall be conducted by a show of voting cards unless a ballot be demanded by at least two thirds of the delegates qualified to vote or the Chairman so decides.

(F) No individual shall be entitled to vote on behalf of more than one Member Club.

(G) Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at the Annual General Meeting without satisfactory reason being given *shall* be fined £20.

(H) Officers and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at an Annual General Meeting.

## **AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED**

7. The Chairman and the Secretary of each Club shall complete and sign the following agreement which shall be deposited with the Competition together with the Application for Membership for the coming season, or upon indicating that the Club intends to compete.

"We, A, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman) and  
B \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ (Secretary) of the  
\_\_\_\_\_ Football Club have been provided with a copy of the  
Rules and Regulations of the \_\_\_\_\_ Competition and do hereby agree for  
and on behalf of the said Club, if elected or accepted into Membership, to conform to those  
Rules and Regulations and to accept, abide by and implement the decisions of the  
Management Committee of the Competition, subject to the right of appeal in accordance with  
Rule 16."

Any alteration of the Chairman and /or Secretary on the above Agreement must be notified to the \_\_\_\_\_ County Football Association(s) to which the Club is affiliated and to the Secretary of the Competition.

(Note: The spaces above are intended for the inclusion of the signatures and addresses of officers and members).

## **QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS**

8. (A) Contract players, as defined in Football Association Rules, *are not* permitted in this Competition. A contract player may only play for the Club that holds his contract. It is the responsibility of each Club to ensure that any Player signing a registration form for that Club has, where necessary, the required international Transfer Certificate. Clearance is required for any Player aged 12 and over crossing borders including Wales, Scotland and Ireland.

(B) A registered playing member of a Club is one who, being in all other respects eligible, has:-

*(i) Signed a fully and correctly completed Competition registration form in ink, countersigned by an Officer of the Club, and who has been registered with the (Registrations) Secretary by 7pm on Fridays prior to playing and whose completed registration counterfoil has been received by the Club prior to playing. Incorrect forms will result in a fine of £2 per form being imposed.*

*Registration forms may also be submitted to the (Registrations) Secretary by facsimile machine or electronic mail prior to the player playing. The original document must be forwarded by post within three days of the match to the appropriate Officer.*

*(ii) While serving in any branch of Her Majesty's Regular Forces, a player must first obtain the consent of his Association Secretary before signing a registration form to play for a Club.*

(C) A player having taken part in matches for any Club affiliated to any County Football Association shall not be allowed to join, be transferred to, or sign for a Club in the Competition without first proving to the officials of the intended Club that the player has discharged all reasonable financial liabilities to the previous Club or Clubs, and a Club official may not accept such player's signature without first ascertaining whether such claims have been discharged to the satisfaction of the Club, or Clubs, for which the player last played.

Registration forms shall be obtained from the (Registrations) Secretary (on payment of 50p per registration form).

(D) The Management Committee shall decide all registration disputes.

In the event of a player signing a registration form or having a registration submitted for more than one Club priority of registration shall decide for which Club the player shall be registered. The (Registrations) Secretary shall notify the Club last applying to register the player of the fact of the previous registration.

(E) It shall be a breach of Rule for a player to:-

(i) Play for more than one Club in the Competition in the same season without first being transferred.

(ii) Having signed for one Club in the Competition, sign for another Club in the Competition in that season except for the purpose of a transfer.

(iii) Submit a signed registration form for registration that the player had wilfully neglected to accurately or fully complete.

(F) (i) The Management Committee shall have power to accept the registration of any player.

(ii) The Management Committee shall have power to refuse, cancel or suspend the registration of any player or may fine any player, except those under 18 years of age, at their discretion who has been charged and found guilty of registration irregularities. (Subject to Rule 16).

(iii) The Management Committee shall have power to make application to refuse or cancel the registration of any player charged and found guilty of undesirable conduct (subject to Rule 16) subject to the right of appeal to the FA or the relevant County Football Association. Undesirable conduct shall mean an incident of repeated conduct, which may deter a participant from being involved in this Competition. Application should be made to the parent County of the Club the player is registered with.

(Note: Action under Clause (iii) shall not be taken against a player for misconduct until the matter has been dealt with by the appropriate Association, and then only in cases of the player bringing the Competition into disrepute and will in any case be subject to an Appeal to the Football Association.) For the purpose of this Rule, bringing the competition into disrepute can only be considered where the player has received in excess of 112 days' suspension, or 10 matches in match based discipline, in a period of two years or less from the date of the first offence.

(G) Subject to The Football Association Rules dealing with players without a written contract when a player desires a transfer, the Club the player wishes to transfer to shall submit a transfer form to the (*Registrations*) Secretary. Such transfer shall be referred by the Secretary to the Club for which the player is registered. Should this Club object to the transfer it should state its objections in writing to the (*Registrations*) Secretary and to the player concerned within seven days of receipt of the transfer form. Upon receipt of the Club's consent, or upon its failure to give written objection within seven days, the (*Registrations*) Secretary may, on behalf of the Management Committee, transfer the player who shall be deemed eligible to play for the new Club from such date after receipt of such transfer.

In the event of an objection to a transfer the matter shall be referred to the Management Committee for a decision.

(H) A player may not be registered for a Club nor transferred to another Club in the Competition after 31<sup>st</sup> March except by special permission of the Management Committee.

(I) A Club shall keep a list of the players it registers and a record of the games in which they have played, and shall produce such records upon demand by the Management Committee.

(J) A register containing the names of all players registered for each Club, with the date of registration, shall be kept by the (*Registrations*) Secretary and shall be open to the inspection of any duly appointed Member Club representative at all Management Committee meetings or at other times mutually arranged. Registrations are valid for one Season only.

In the event of a player without a written contract changing his status to that of a contract player with the same Club, another Club in the Competition or with a Club in another Competition his registration as a player without a written contract will automatically be cancelled and declared void. In order to play in the League again either for his original Club or for another Club it will be necessary for him to be re-registered as required by this Rule.

(K) A player shall not be eligible to play for a team in any special championship, promotion or relegation deciding match (as specified in Rule 12(A)) unless the player has played Four (4) games for that team in this Competition in the current season.

(L) A player who has played for a team in a higher Division shall not in that season be eligible to play in a lower Division except by permission of the Management Committee.

(M)(i) Any team playing an unregistered or otherwise ineligible player or players shall have the points gained in the match deducted from its total and may be fined £25 and/or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Management Committee.

(ii) In addition the team shall have three (3) points deducted from its total by the Management Committee and may be dealt with in any further manner which is thought to be fit.

(iii) The Management Committee shall award the points available in the match in question to the opponents, subject to the match not being ordered to be replayed.

(The following Clause applies to Competitions involving players in full-time secondary education):-

(N) (i) Priority must be given at all times to school and school organisations activities.

(ii) The availability of children must be cleared with the Head Teachers (except for Sunday Leagues).

(iii) To play open age football the player must have achieved the age of 16.

#### **CLUB COLOURS. CLUB NAME**

9. (A) Every Club must register the colour of its shirts and shorts with the Secretary by the date of the AGM who shall decide as to their suitability.

Goalkeepers must wear colours which distinguish them from other players and the referee.

No player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts.

Any team not being able to play in its normal colours as registered with the Competition shall notify the colours in which they will play to its opponents at least four (4) days before the match.

If, in the opinion of the referee, two Clubs have the same or similar colours, the *home* team shall make the change. Any team not having a change of colours or delaying the kick-off by not having a change shall be fined ten pounds (£10).

The Secretary of the Competition may request shirts to be submitted if complaints are received as to lack of distinguishing colours, and the Management Committee may refuse to permit any shirts or shorts as they think fit. *Shirts must be numbered.*

(B) Any Club wishing to change its name and/or colours must obtain permission from its affiliated County Association and from the Management Committee.

#### **PLAYING SEASON. CONDITIONS OF PLAY**

#### **TIMES OF KICK-OFF. POSTPONEMENTS. SUBSTITUTES**

10. (A) The Annual General Meeting shall determine the date for the commencement of the season in accordance with Football Association Rules. Original fixtures arranged by the (*Fixtures*) Secretary, or at a meeting specially convened for that purpose, must not be arranged for a date later than seven days preceding the concluding date determined by the Annual General Meeting.

*Any Club failing to be represented at a fixture meeting or otherwise infringing this Rule shall be liable for a fine of ten pounds (£10) on the first occasion and twenty pounds (£20) on subsequent occasions and the (Fixtures) Secretary shall arrange that Club's fixtures.*

(B) All matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board.

Clubs must take all reasonable precautions to keep their grounds in a playable condition. All matches shall be played on pitches deemed suitable by the Management Committee. If through any fault of the home team a match has to be replayed, the Management Committee shall have power to order the venue to be changed.

The Management Committee shall have power to decide whether a pitch and/or facilities are suitable for matches in the Competition and to order the Club concerned to play its fixtures on another ground.

All matches shall have a duration of 90 minutes unless a shorter time (not less than 70 minutes) is mutually arranged by the two captains in consultation with the referee prior to the commencement of the match, and in any event shall be of equal halves.

The times of kick-off shall be fixed by the Management Committee. Any Club failing to commence at the appointed time *may* be fined a sum not exceeding ten pounds (£10) or be otherwise dealt with as the Management Committee may determine.

Referees must order matches to commence at the appointed time and must report all late starts to the Competition.

The home team must provide at least two footballs fit for play and the referee shall make a report to the Competition if the footballs are unsuitable. *Goal nets must be used.*

(C) Except by permission of the Management Committee all matches must be played on the dates originally fixed but priority shall be given to The Football Association and all relevant County Association Cup Competitions. All other matches must be considered secondary.

In the case of a revised fixture date, the Clubs must be given by the Competition 5 clear day's notice of the match.

(D) The Secretary of the home Club must give notice of full particulars of the location of, and access to, the ground and time of kick-off to the *match officials* and the Secretary of the opposing Club at least four (4) clear days prior to the playing of the match. *The away Club shall seek and acknowledge receipt of such particulars.*

Any Club failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to a fine of £10.

(E) In the event of a Club playing in any match with less than 11 players they *may* be fined £5 for each missing player. A minimum of 7 players will constitute a team for a Competition match.

(F) Home and away matches shall be played. In the event of a Club failing to keep its engagement the Management Committee shall have power to inflict a fine, deduct points from the defaulting Club, *award the points from the match in question to the opponents*, order the defaulting Club to pay any expenses incurred by the opponents or otherwise deal with them except the award of goals. *Notwithstanding the foregoing home and away provision, the Management Committee shall have power to order a match to be played on a neutral ground or on the opponent's ground if they are satisfied that such action is warranted by the circumstances.*

Any Club unable to fulfil a fixture must, without delay, give notice to the (Fixtures) Secretary, the Competition *Referees Appointments* Secretary, the Secretary of the opposing Club and the match officials. Any Club failing to comply shall be dealt with by the Management Committee who shall inflict a fine of £10.

In the event of a match not being played or abandoned owing to causes over which neither Club has control, it shall be played in its entirety on a date to be fixed by the Management Committee.

The Management Committee shall review all matches abandoned in cases where it is consequent upon the conduct of either or both Teams. Where it is to the advantage of the Competition and does no injustice to either Club, the Management Committee shall be

empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand. In all cases where the Management Committee are satisfied that a match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one team or its Club member(s) they shall be empowered to *award the points for the match to the opponent*. In cases where a match has been abandoned owing to the conduct of both teams or their Club member(s), the Management Committee shall rule all points for the match as void. No fine(s) can be applied by the Management Committee for an abandoned match.

(G) A Club may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game use 3 substitute players in any match in this Competition who may be selected from 5 players.

The referee shall be informed of the names of the substitutes not later than 10 minutes before the start of the match.

A player who has been selected, appointed or named as a substitute before the start of the match but does not actually play in the game shall not be considered to have been a player in that game within the meaning of Rule 8 of this Competition.

(H) The half time interval shall be of 5 minutes duration, but it shall not exceed fifteen minutes. The half time interval may only be altered with the consent of the referee.

(I) *The League shall require all players and club officials to have signed the FA's Respect Codes of Conduct and produce these if so requested by the League management committee.*

*The participating clubs taking part in the fixture shall identify a team captain designated with a captain's armband who has a responsibility to offer support in the management of the on-field discipline of his team mates.*

*Prior to each match the participating teams and officials shall conduct the 'Respect' handshake.*

## **REPORTING RESULTS**

11. (A) The Results Secretary must receive within 4 days of the date played, the result of each Competition match in the prescribed manner. This must include the forename(s) and surname of the team players (in block letters) *and also the Referee markings required by Rule 13, or any other information required by the Competition*. Failure to do so will incur a fine of £10 and/or the Club being dealt with as the Management Committee decide.

*(B) The Home Club shall telephone/notify the result of each match to the Press Officer between 1230hrs and 1430hrs on Sundays and before 2100hrs on mid-week games. Clubs in default shall be fined £10.*

(C) The match result notification, correctly completed, shall be signed by a responsible member of the Club. Failure to do so will result in a fine of £10.

## **DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP**

12. (A) Team rankings within the Competition will be decided by points with 3 points to be awarded for a win and 1 point for a drawn match. The teams gaining the highest number of points in their respective Divisions at the conclusion shall be adjudged the winners. Matches must not be played for double points.

*In the event of two or more teams being equal on points team rankings shall be decided by the playing of deciding match(s) to a conclusion-extra time and penalty kicks to be taken from the penalty mark in accordance with the prescribed rules.*

(B) *Automatic promotion and relegation shall be applied for the first 2 and last 2 teams in each Division except as provided for hereunder, subject to the provisions of Rule 1(b).*

*(i) Should one or more teams withdraw from any one Division after the fixtures have commenced an equal number of teams to those withdrawing in that Division shall not be automatically relegated.*

(ii) Vacancies occurring after the conclusion of the season may be filled on any of the following ways:

- (a) retention of otherwise relegated team(s)
- (b) additional promotion of the next ranked team(s) from the Division below
- (c) election

(iii) The last 2 teams in the lowest Division shall retire, but be eligible for re-election except as below, and be subject to the conditions of paragraph (B)(1) above.

(C) In the event of a team not completing 75% of its fixtures for the season all points obtained by or recorded against such defaulting team shall be expunged from the Competition table.

## REFEREES

13. (A) Registered Referees (and Assistant Referees where approved by the FA or County FA) for all matches shall be appointed in a manner approved by the Management Committee and by the sanctioning Association(s).

(B) In the event of the non-appearance of the appointed Referee the *appointed senior Assistant Referee shall take charge and a substitute Assistant Referee appointed by the competing Teams*. In cases where there are no officially appointed Assistant Referees, the Clubs shall agree upon a Referee. A Referee thus agreed upon shall, for that game, have the full powers, status and authority of a registered Referee.

(C) *Where Assistant Referees are not appointed each Team shall provide a Club Assistant Referee. Failure to do so will result in a fine of £5 being imposed on the defaulting Team.*

(D) The appointed Referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the ground in all matches and the decision shall be final *subject to either in the case of a ground of a Local Authority or the owners of a ground, the Representative of that body is the sole arbitrator and whose decision must be accepted unless the ground is declared fit for play.*

(E) Match Officials appointed under this Rule shall be entitled to the following match fees:- Referee £18, Assistant Referees £10 (*exclusive of travel expenses or private car expenses of 25p per mile*) and any other permitted expenses actually incurred subject to any limits laid down by the sanctioning Association(s).

The Home Club shall pay the Officials their fees and expenses *before* the match.

(F) In the event of a match not being played because of circumstances over which the Clubs have no control, the Match Officials, if present, shall be entitled to *half fee plus expenses*. Where a match is not played owing to one Club being in default, that Club shall be ordered to pay the Officials, if they attend the ground, their full fee and expenses.

(G) A Referee not keeping his or her engagement, and failing to give a satisfactory explanation as to their non-appearance, may be reported to the Association with which he or she is registered.

(H) Each Club shall, in a manner prescribed from time to time by The Football Association, award marks to the Referee for each match and the name of the Referee and the marks awarded shall be submitted to the Competition on the prescribed Form provided. Clubs failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to be fined or dealt with as the Management Committee shall determine.

(I) The Competition shall keep a record of the markings and, on the Form provided by the prescribed date each season, shall submit a summary to The Football Association/County Association.

(J) *The Referee shall complete and sign a report Form, supplied by the Competition, giving the result of the match, the number of players cautioned / dismissed in each team and substitutes used.*

(K) Referees and Assistant Referees shall be supplied, each Season, with a copy of the Competition Rules free of charge.

(L) Referees and Assistant Referees shall have undertaken a Respect briefing offered by the FA/County FA or the League.

#### **CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP OR WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB**

14. (A) After 31<sup>st</sup> December in the current Season a Club intending, or having a provisional intention, to withdraw a team from the Competition on completion of its fixtures and fulfilment of all other obligations to the Competition must notify the Secretary in writing *by 31<sup>st</sup> March* each Season or be liable to a fine not exceeding £100.

(B) A Club shall not be allowed to withdraw its team from the Competition after the *arrangement of fixtures* for the following Season.

(i) Any Club infringing this Rule after the fixtures have commenced shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 and shall also be liable for its share of any call which may be made under Rule 5(B).

(ii) Any Club infringing this Rule and not disbanding before the fixtures have commenced shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £100 per team and shall also be liable for its share of any call which may be made under Rule 5(B).

(C) The Membership for the coming season having been decided at a Special General Meeting held or at the Annual General Meeting held not later than June the Competition shall have the right, irrespective of other provisions in this Rule, to refuse to permit a Club to withdraw its team in order to join another Competition and may hold the Club to its engagements

(D) In the event of a Member Club which is an un-incorporated association withdrawing and/or disbanding it shall be immediately liable to discharge all its financial and other obligations to the Competition.

In the event that any such obligation remains undischarged after a period of twenty-one (21) days then such obligation shall be met by the then current Club Members, excluding those under the statutory school leaving age. Until a Member's pro rata obligation is discharged in full the Member shall not be allowed to participate in the Competition, which may apply to the Club's Parent County Association for a suspension order.

If the debt remains unpaid after eighty-four (84) days the Competition may apply to the Club's parent County Association for the debt to be recovered in accordance with the FA Football Debt Recovery System. Once the matter has been passed to the Club's parent County Association the debt can only be cleared by payment to that County Association.

#### **PROTESTS AND COMPLAINTS**

15. (A)(i) All questions of eligibility, qualifications of players or interpretations of the Rules shall be referred to the Management Committee.

(ii) Objections relevant to the dimensions of the pitch, goals, flag posts or other facilities of the venue will not be entertained by the Management Committee unless a protest is lodged with the Referee before the commencement of the match. Any Club lodging such protest and not proceeding with it shall be deemed guilty of a breach of this Rule and shall be dealt with by the Management Committee.

(B) Except in cases where the Management Committee decide that there are special circumstances, protests and complaints (which must contain full particulars of the grounds upon which they are founded) must be lodged in duplicate with the Secretary within 7 days (excluding Sundays) of the match or occurrence to which they refer. A protest or complaint shall not be withdrawn except by permission of the Management Committee. A Member of the Management Committee who is a member of any Club involved shall not be present (except as a witness or representative of his Club) when such protest or complaint is being determined.

(C) Any dispute occurring between Clubs in the Competition shall be referred for determination by the Management Committee whose decision shall be binding upon all parties subject to Rule 16.

(D) No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Management Committee unless the complaining Club shall have deposited with the Secretary a sum of £20. This may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the complaining or protesting Club losing its case. The Competition shall have power to order the defaulting Club or the Club making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of the enquiry or to order that the costs to be shared by the parties.

(E) ) All parties to a protest or complaint must receive a copy of the submission and must be afforded an opportunity to make a statement at least 7 days prior to the protest or complaint being heard.

(i) All parties must have received 7 days' notice of the Hearing should they be instructed to attend.

(ii) Should a Club elect to state its case in person then they should forward a deposit of £20 and indicate such when forwarding the written response.

### **BOARD OF APPEAL**

16. Within 14 days of the posting of written notification of any decision of the Management Committee or the Competition, a Club, Official or Player against whom action is taken may appeal against such decision by lodging particulars in duplicate with the Secretary of the Northumberland Football Association, including a fee of £50, for adjudication of a Board of Appeal. The grounds of appeal shall be in accordance with FA Rules. The Board of Appeal may order the appeal fee to be forfeited and shall decide by whom the costs of the appeal shall be borne. The decision of the Board of Appeal is final and binding on all parties concerned.

No appeal can be lodged against a decision taken at an Annual or Special General Meeting unless this is on the ground of unconstitutional conduct.

### **EXCLUSION OF CLUBS OR TEAMS MISCONDUCT, CLUBS, OFFICIALS, PLAYERS**

17. (A) At the Annual General Meeting, or Special General Meeting called for the purpose, Notice of Motion having been duly circulated on the Agenda, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude any Club or Team from further membership which must be supported by (more than) two thirds (2/3) of those present and voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot.

(B) At the Annual General Meeting, or at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 19, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude from further participation in the Competition any Club whose conduct has, in their opinion, been undesirable, which must be supported by (more than) two-thirds (2/3rds) of those present and voting. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot. A Club whose conduct is the subject of the vote being taken shall be excluded from voting.

(C) Any official or member of a Club proved guilty of either a breach of Rule, other than field offences, or of inducing or attempting to induce a player or players of another Club in the Competition to join them shall be liable to expulsion or such penalty as a General Meeting or Management Committee may decide, and their Club shall also be liable to expulsion in accordance with the provisions of Clauses (A) and (B) of this Rule.

(D) *Any Team failing to complete all but two of its fixtures in any season shall (unless the conditions are beyond their control, or the accredited delegates present at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting decide otherwise by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast) be debarred from membership the following season.*

**TROPHY:- LEGAL OWNERS, CONDITIONS OF TAKING OVER,  
AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED. AWARDS.**

18. (A) If a Competition is discontinued for any reason a Trophy or any other presentation shall be returned to the Donor if the conditions attached to it so provide or, if not, dealt with as the sanctioning Association may decide.

(B)The following agreement shall be signed on behalf of the winners of the Cup or Trophy:-

"We A \_\_\_\_\_ and B \_\_\_\_\_, the Chairman and Secretary of \_\_\_\_\_ FC, members of and representing the Club, having been declared winners of \_\_\_\_\_ Cup or Trophy, and it having been delivered to us by the Competition, do hereby on behalf of the Club jointly and severally agree to return the Cup or Trophy to the Competition Secretary on or before \_\_\_\_\_. If the Cup or Trophy is lost or damaged whilst under our care we agree to refund to the Competition the amount of its current value or the cost of its thorough repair."

All cups to be returned to the League at the February meeting. Failure to comply will result in a fine as determined by the Management Committee.

(C) *At the close of each Competition awards may/shall be made to the winners and runners-up if the funds of the Competition permit.*

**SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

19. Upon receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds of the Clubs in membership the Secretary shall call a Special General Meeting.

The Management Committee may call a Special General Meeting at any time.

At least seven days notice shall be given of either meeting under this Rule, together with an agenda of the business to be transacted at such meeting.

Each Member Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to all Special General Meetings. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only, as will members of the Management Committee.

Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at a Special General Meeting without satisfactory reason being given *shall* be fined £20.

Officers and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at all Special General Meetings.

**All amendment of Rules can only be implemented once approved by the appropriate sanctioning authority.**

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**ALTERATION TO RULES**

20. Alterations, **for which consent has been given by the sanctioning Association**, shall be made to these Rules only at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting specially convened for the purpose called in accordance with Rule 19. Any alteration made during the playing season to the Rule relating to the qualification of players shall not take effect until the following season.

Notice of proposed alterations to be considered at the Annual General Meeting shall be submitted to the Secretary by April meeting in each year. The proposals, together with any proposals by the Management Committee, shall be circulated to the Clubs by May meeting and any amendments thereto shall be submitted to the Secretary by 24<sup>th</sup> May. The proposals and proposed amendments thereto shall be circulated to Clubs with the notice of the Annual

General Meeting. A proposal to change a Rule shall be carried if 2/3rds [a majority] of those present and entitled to vote are in favour.

A copy of the proposed alterations to Rules to be considered at the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting shall be submitted to the sanctioning Football Association 14 days prior to the date of the meeting.

### FINANCE

21. (A) The Management Committee shall determine with which bank or other financial institution the funds of the Competition will be lodged.
- (B) All expenditure shall be approved by the Management Committee. Cheques shall be signed by at least two Officers nominated by the Management Committee.
- (C) The financial year of the Competition will end on 31<sup>st</sup> MAY.
- (D) The books, or a certified balance sheet, of a Competition shall be prepared and shall be *verified* annually by some suitable person(s) who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

### CHALLENGE CUP RULES.

22. The competitions are governed by the general rules of the Northumberland Football Association, National Sunday League Competition and the Blyth & Wansbeck Sunday Football League. All Clubs in active membership with the League must join in the competitions. No Club shall be allowed to postpone a cup match unless engaged in an English / County Association Competition.

a. Players eligible to play in cup competitions are those who have been duly registered with their Clubs by 7pm on Friday prior to the game *and whose completed registration counterfoil has been received by the Club prior to playing.*, and no player shall be allowed to play for more than one competing Club and only those who have played two (2) competitive fixtured games (friendly games not included) for their club prior to the date set for the first semi-final shall be eligible to play in the semi-final and final. In the event of a team resigning from the League, any player having played in a round against that team, these games not to count in the aforementioned criteria. In exceptional circumstances, goalkeepers who do not meet these criteria MAY be granted permission to play by the Management Committee, provided **written** application is made to the General League Secretary.

b. The individual League (Division) Cups will be

Premier Division- S.A. Randolph Cup

Division One- Saints Shield

Division Two- Eric Anderson Memorial Trophy.

A player who has played in any round of any of the League Divisions competitions, then transfers to another team in the League shall not be eligible to play in any rounds of the other divisional competitions.

c. In all Cup Competitions, in every round, including the Final, if after ninety (90) minutes, the scores are level, two periods of fifteen (15) minutes each way extra time shall be played. (See N.F.A. Rules regarding loss of adequate playing light.)

If the scores are still level the winners shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the Penalty mark in accordance with the procedure adopted by the International Football Association Board.

The half time interval shall be five (5) minutes, which only the referee may alter at his discretion.

d. Semi-final ties to be played on the basis of the first club drawn at home.

e. All players playing in the semi-final and final ties shall personally sign the result sheet to check eligibility. Each Club to submit its own result sheet.

f. The Management Committee shall arrange to fix the ground for the Final and all proceeds will be the responsibility of the League, as the League will meet all expenses. Final ties to kick-off at a time decided by the Management Committee.

g. In the event of a colour clash the first drawn team will change.

- h. All finalists to be responsible for 35 match programmes at a cost determined by the Management Committee, which should be paid for before the final. Each finalist will provide a suitable match ball for the final. The League will provide a match ball also.
- i. All finalists will if funds permit, receive a set of eighteen (18) trophies. A plaque or trophy will be presented to the secretaries and managers of the two finalists only if he is not a registered player of his club.
- j. Any Club who has a minimum of seven players, one of whom must act as a goalkeeper, cannot refuse to pay a game on the grounds of being under-strength. The Management Committee shall deal with any Club starting a game with less than eleven (11) players. In the event of any Club causing a match to be abandoned/postponed because they have fewer than seven (7) players, that club may at the discretion of the Management Committee be fined £25 for the first offence and no more than £50 for each subsequent offence. The defaulting club shall be removed from the competition.
- k. Any Club playing an ineligible player in any round of the League Cup competitions shall be fined a minimum of £25 and shall be removed from the competition and the game awarded to their opponents. The Management Committee shall have the discretion to have any game replayed.  
**No club shall obtain a direct bye into a cup final.**
- l. Each Club may play three (3) substitutes from five (5) nominated to the referee in accordance with the Laws of The Game.
- m. A maximum of nine (9) Club members shall be allowed in the dug-outs at cup finals.
- n. In the event of the Home Club's ground being engaged on the date of any rounds, the game shall be played on their opponents ground.
- o. Cup Final programmes; All semi-finalists to submit all relevant details of their team for entry in the Cup Final programme to the General League Secretary by Mail or email no later than 4 days before their respective Semi-final.  
Failure to do so will result in the Club being fined £10.

#### **GEORGE DAVISON MEMORIAL TROPHY / J.D. MARNOCK CUP.**

23. The George Davison Memorial Cup shall be contested by all teams in the League.  
Those teams competing in the J.D. Marnock Cup shall be those teams who are defeated in the first and second rounds of the George Davison Memorial Trophy.
- A player who has played in any round of the George Davison Memorial Trophy / J D Marnock Cup, then transfers or joins another Club in the League, shall not be eligible to play in any further rounds of either of these competitions.**
- a. Any club found guilty of any default in the preliminary or first round of the George Davison Cup Competition, shall be ineligible to compete in the J.D.Marnock Cup Competition. Any Club playing an ineligible player in any round of either competition shall be fined a minimum of £25 and shall be removed from the competition and the game awarded to their opponents. For any other instance The Management Committee shall have the discretion to have any game replayed.  
**No club shall obtain a direct bye into a cup final.**

#### **ALAN DAVISON CHALLENGE CUP COMPETITION**

24. All teams in the league shall contest the Alan Davison Challenge Cup Competition.  
Games will be played on a knock-out basis as per general cup competition rules. The first club drawn to be deemed as the home team. If the game ends in a draw after 90 minutes, extra time of 15 minutes each way will be played. If at the end of this the scores are equal the game shall be decided on the taking of penalties as per international FA rules.  
Any Club playing an ineligible player in any round of the competition shall be fined a minimum of £25 and shall be removed from the competition and the game awarded to their opponents. The Management Committee shall have the discretion to have any game replayed.  
**No club shall obtain a direct bye into a cup final.**

#### **REFEREES**

25. All rounds of cup competitions shall be appointed registered referees. Assistant referees shall be appointed to all semi-final games. Referees fees and expenses shall be £18 plus 25p per mile travelling. Assistant referees shall receive a fee of £10 and 25p per mile travelling expenses in accordance with Northumberland Football Association guidelines. A substitute referee may be nominated by mutual agreement between both Club secretaries (must be qualified). If the appointed

referee attends the match he / she will take over the match. If no qualified referee attends, the match must be postponed and the matter reported to the Fixture Secretary. The home Club shall be responsible for paying the above total expenses, except in semi-final games, when the costs will be shared.

### **FAIR PLAY COMPETITION RULES.**

26. Each Club begins the season with 250 points.

a. Points are deducted as follows:

Cautions – five (5) points

Dismissals- ten (10) points

b. Referees to state all bookings and or dismissals on the results sheet provided.

c. The Club(s) who completes the season with the most points shall be declared the winners.

d. In the event of tie(s) the club with the most man-of –the –match awards per individual player shall receive the trophy and the sponsor's prize shall be divided accordingly.

e. Should a clubs or players appeal against points deducted be successful, the points to be reinstated. If a club resigns from the League teams who have played this club and received caution/ dismissals will have their points reinstated.

f. Any Club down to 150 points shall appear before the Management Committee and shall be fined £1 per point lost below 150 points. If a Club reaches 100 points or less the club shall be placed on probation for the following season and may be expelled from the League at the end of the following season. All players will be monitored for persistent misconduct.

#### **GENERAL.**

27. Any Club requiring confirmation of eligibility of players shall write to the Records Officer enclosing a stamped, self addressed, envelope for reply, or by email. Telephone requests will not be accepted.

28. A trophy shall be awarded to a player from each division whom the Management Committee contend is most suitable and which shall be known as Player of the Year Trophy. League games only to count for this award.

29. A trophy shall be awarded to the Secretary of a club from each division whom the Management Committee shall select and shall be known as the Secretary of the Year Award.

30. A trophy shall be awarded to the player in each division scoring the highest number of goal. League games only to count.

31. Each Club must produce a copy of their current insurance policy, covering injury to players during all games within the League. A copy of the policy is to be handed to the League Treasurer before 1<sup>st</sup> July each year or on renewal.

Clubs will not be allowed to play without insurance as above. Any club causing a game to be postponed due to not producing/having insurance cover shall be fined £25 the game shall be awarded to the opponents and three points deducted from league records if a league match.

32. Any Club causing a game to be postponed due to being suspended by Northumberland Football Association for lack of administration shall be fined £25, have 3 points deducted from their league records and the game will be awarded to the opposing club.

33. When League representative matches are arranged, the team shall be selected by a person or persons nominated by the Management Committee. Players and respective Club secretaries shall be informed by letter of this selection, failure to reply as requested shall result in the Club being fined £10 for lack of correspondence.

34. It is advisable for all Clubs to provide first aid equipment at games and to have qualified first aid personnel in attendance.

35. Any phone calls to Management members must be made before 9pm. Any Clubs telephoning between 9pm and 9am will result in that Club being fined £5. Emergency calls between these times will be accepted (on mobile numbers only) if deemed so by the Management Committee.