



A Guide to the Rules

2023-24 Issue

Introduction & Welcome

Hello and Welcome to the 2023/24 NCYFL Season.

The answer to 90% of the questions we're asked, is in this guide. We like to talk to you and hear from you but help us by checking the guide first!

The league season starts on the weekend of 2nd September 2023 and finishes on 31st May 2024. All matches must be completed by this date.

A small disclaimer in that this guide is not exhaustive of all the rules and regulations within NCYFL and we always recommend reading the full set of rules that are available later in this guide.

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Accessing the Rules

Where can I find a copy of the league rules?

A full copy of the league rules can be found via the following [link](#).

Managers and Club Officials are advised that they should have a good understanding of all League Rules, prior to participating in a league competition in the NCYFL.

What about the Cup and Trophy Event Rules?

A full copy of the Cup/Trophy rules can be found via the following links.

[Cup Rules](#)

[Trophy Event Rules](#) (U7-U8)

[Trophy Event Rules](#) (U9-U11)

Managers and Club Officials are advised that they should have a good understanding of all Cup/Trophy Rules, prior to participating in the Cup/Trophy competition in the NCYFL.

Fixture Postponements

How do I postpone a league fixture?

Firstly, here is a reminder of the League Rules surrounding postponements.

- *LR20.5 Postponement of any scheduled fixture will only be permitted in the following circumstances:*
 - i) Entry into a National or County FA Competition*
 - ii) Providing 3 or more players for League Representative matches, County School teams or trials*
 - iii) Any school activity under Rule 18(N)(i) involving 3 players or more*
 - iv) Any official Scout parade i.e. St George's Day*
 - v) On instruction from the Management Committee, League Secretary or Divisional Secretary*
 - vi) Adverse weather conditions*
- *With the exception of points v) and vi) above, at least 7 days notice of any such postponement shall be given. Failure to give the required notice may result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.*
- *LR20.6 In the event of a team postponing a fixture under LR20.5(iii) the Club must provide to the Competition appropriate evidence within 7 days of the scheduled fixture.*
- *LR20.7 Additionally teams will be permitted to call off one league game per season. This call off cannot be used for matches to be played after 1st April or for the purpose of participation in an external competition.*

Teams are not able to invoke LR20.7 unless 48 hours' notice is given to the age group secretary and opposition team.

Please DO NOT email your divisional secretary stating a match has been postponed – the secretary will simply advise you to ask your club secretary to report the postponement via the link above.

ALL postponements must be reported to the league via the Club Admin site. For all postponements, please liaise with the opposition within 7 days of the notification of postponement to find a mutually agreeable date. If this is not done, or agreed, the age group secretary will reschedule where fit.

If you receive an appointed referee by Norfolk County FA (*you'll receive an email from the Full-Time system confirming this*), you must inform them and receive confirmation that they are aware the fixture has been postponed.

What happens if our pitch is waterlogged/frozen/baked from the sun?

- *LR20.17 In the event of the home club being unable to fulfil a League match because of the inclement weather or ground conditions the home club shall before postponing the match and provided that the two teams has not already played the reverse League fixture ascertain from their opponents whether their ground is available and if it is the match shall be played on the ground of the opposing team. Any Club failing to comply with the rule may be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.*

If you have not played each other in a League fixture yet, please liaise with each other to see if the oppositions venue can be used. If it can be used, please reverse the fixture and inform the age group secretary so they can amend Full-Time. If it can't, the club secretary of the defaulting team must submit a postponement form. Please liaise with the opposition within 7 days of the notification of postponement to find a mutually agreeable date. If this is not done, or agreed, the age group secretary will reschedule where fit.

Can I postpone a cup/trophy event fixture?

No, these can however be brought forward if both teams and the age group secretary agree to do so.

- **(4)** *Each tie must take place on or before the given date allocated for the fixture. The tie can be brought forward from the original fixture date (with agreement from both teams) but not moved back.*

I have players participating in a school trip/event, what can I do?

- *LR20.5 Postponement of any scheduled fixture will only be permitted in the following circumstances:*
 - *(ii) Providing 3 or more players for League Representative matches, County School teams or trials*
 - *(iii) Any school activity under Rule 18(N)(i) involving 3 players or more*
- *With the exception of points v) and vi) above, at least 7 days notice of any such postponement shall be given. Failure to give the required notice may result in a fine in accordance with the Fines Tariff.*

This means that your club must complete a postponement request on the league admin portal. This must be done at least 7 days prior to the requested postponement date (ideally with as much notice as possible) with evidence from the school (letter or email containing the players' names and nature of the event). This will then be discussed by the league management committee and either approved or rejected. The league will factor in the number of registered players for the team before making any decision.

Can I push a game back or bring forward?

Yes. If you wish to change the fixture date, contact the opposing team. You will need to provide evidence of the agreement to the relevant age group secretary before they will agree to change the fixture. Please note NCYFL will only agree fixtures being moved to April and May 2024 if there are very good reasons for doing so.

League Funding

What league funding is available?

The NCYFL has a range of funding available to clubs, a summary of the funding is presented below.

ALL League Funding can be claimed via the following [link](#);

Referee Equalisation

This applies to referees who are appointed by NCFA to matches in the NCYFL.

- The NCYFL will refund a proportion of the referee cost incurred by teams who have referees appointed to their fixtures by NCFA.
- Clubs that receive referees in appointed divisions should complete this form after every NCYFL match.
- The form must be submitted within 48 hours of kick off.

Referee Bursary

- NCYFL will provide a bursary payment (£80.00) to referees upon completion of the FA Referee Course and completion of 8 matches within NCYFL.
- At least 5 matches must be completed at U11 and above, and 3 can be completed at mini soccer.
- Your name must be input by the home team on Full-Time for all fixtures.

Player Injury Fund

- NCYFL may provide discretionary payments to players who have, unfortunately, received serious injury as a result of action taking place in a NCYFL match during the current season.

Sports Glasses Bursary

- If your child needs the use of glasses to play football, they should be wearing sports glasses when playing or training.
- To support in the cost of this, the NCYFL are increasing the bursary on offer to £40 per player.
- Parents and carers can submit a copy of their receipt for a purchased pair and claim back from the NCYFL.

Players, Registrations & Transfers

How do I register/de-register a player?

All registrations are dealt with by Norfolk FA, so please direct any queries to;

registrations@norfolkfa.com.

Player de-registrations are dealt with by NCYFL. A de-registration costs £10 and the club will be invoiced. For all queries, please direct these to Louis Fisher (Louis.Fisher@ncyfl.co.uk).

Please note the following league rules relating to registrations, including match day registrations. The list below is not exhaustive, but a reminder of the key rules governing player registrations;

LR18.4

- *The maximum number of players who can be registered for a team at any one time are as follows:*
- *11v11 20 players (with the exception of U17 & U18 divisions which will allow 25 players)*
- *9v9 18 players*
- *7v7 14 players*
- *5v5 12 players (10 players permitted only in a matchday squad)*

LR18.5

- *De-registration of a player is permitted with permission of the Management Committee. A fee as set out in the Fee Tariff shall be paid for each player de-registered. Any player de-registered under this Rule cannot then sign for another Club in this Competition until a period of at least 7 days has elapsed from the date of this de-registration. Should the Management Committee deem it appropriate to do so this period can be extended to a maximum of 28 days.*

LR18.6

- *Players will not be permitted to transfer or de-register from when they are initially registered until 1st October. In exceptional circumstances players will be allowed to transfer or de-register in this period with prior permission of the Management Committee.*

LR 18.11

- *Further to Rule 18(A), all registrations must be completed on WGS. Where a player is a match day registration that is not entered on WGS prior to kick off, a Norfolk FA Youth Offline Consent Form must be fully completed, signed by the player and countersigned by an Officer of the Club. Furthermore, the Form must be countersigned by an Officer of the opposing Club. Details of the player registration must then be entered on WGS by midnight on the day of the match. The player shall not play again on a subsequent match day until the player is registered and approved on WGS.*

How do I transfer a player?

For all transfer queries, please direct these to Louis Fisher (Louis.Fisher@ncyfl.co.uk).

Please note the following key league rules related to transferring a player below. A complete list of league rules governing transfer of players can be found on the league website;

(18) (H)

- *Subject to compliance with FA Rule C2(a) when a Club wishes to register a player who is already registered with another club it shall submit a transfer form (in a format as determined by the Competition) to the Competition accompanied by a fee as set out in the Fees Tariff.*
- *Such transfer shall be referred by the Competition 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 Competition and to the player concerned within 3 days of receipt of the notification. Upon receipt of the Club's consent, or upon its failure to give written objection within 3 days, the 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.*
- *In the event of an objection to a transfer the matter shall be referred to the Management Committee for a decision.*

(18) (I)

- *A Player may not be registered for a Club nor transferred to another Club in the Competition after 31 March except by special permission of the Management Committee.*

LR18.6

- *Players will not be permitted to transfer or de-register from when they are initially registered until 1st October In exceptional circumstances players will be allowed to transfer or de-register in this period with prior permission of the Management Committee.*

LR18.7

- *Further to 18.6, players will be permitted to transfer between teams outside of the transfer window if these teams are within the same club.*

Rules Regarding Player Eligibility in Cups and Trophy Events

- **(11)** *A player may not play for a team if they have played in a previous round for another team in the same age group competition in the same season.*
- **(12)** *For the avoidance of doubt, the 4Trophies Cup and 4Sports Trophy are defined as one competition for each age group; should a player play for one team in the 4Trophies Cup or 4Sports Trophy, they shall not be eligible to play for any other team in the 4Trophies Cup or 4Sports Trophy in the same age group that season.*
- **(13)** *No player shall play for a team in the semi-finals or final of any League Cup unless they have played in at least two competitive matches (League or League Cup competitions) for the said team prior to the Semi-Finals during the current season (or was a registered bona fide player for the said team on 1st October of the current season), except with the permission of the committee. Applications for permission to be granted must be submitted in writing to the League Secretary at least five days before the date of the tie.*

How many substitutes can I use?

Mini-Soccer: Any number of return substitutes are permitted.

U11s to U18s: 5 substitutes may be used from 5 players named. Return substitutions are permitted.

Match Returns

How do I complete a match return?

It is a requirement, laid out by The FA, that each team must complete a match return after playing a league or cup fixture. The match return must be completed within three days (72 hours) of the fixture.

There are 2 methods available to completing a match return.

1) Complete via the Full-Time website.

2) Complete via the Matchday App.

The link below includes videos on how to complete a match return using each method.

[Match Return Guides](#)

The NCYFL only uses the Full-Time record. Therefore, if you choose to complete your Match Return via the Matchday App, please ensure that all the data has been filled in and submitted correctly.

Note – it is a breach of league rule 21(A) to not complete a match return within 72 hours of kick-off.

For issues relating to the completion of match cards, please contact your divisional secretary.

Venues & Equipment

What size match ball should my team be using?

Playing with the right size match ball is important! Check the table below to make sure your team is training and playing with the right size ball.

| Age Group | Match Ball Size |
|-----------|-----------------|
| U7 – U10 | Size 3 |
| U11 – U14 | Size 4 |
| U15 – U18 | Size 5 |

Goal Sizes

The correct goal size must be used at every age group.

| Age Group | Goal Size |
|-----------|-------------|
| U7 – U10 | 12 ft x 6ft |
| U11 – U12 | 16ft x 7ft |
| U13 – U14 | 21ft x 7ft |
| U15 – U18 | 24ft x 8ft |

Pitch Sizes

Pitches must be within the minimum and maximum size permitted. Lines must be marked using paint/chalk. Cones are not permitted.

| Age Group | Minimum Size | Maximum Size |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------|
| U7 – U8 | 30 x 20 yards | 40 x 30 yards |
| U9 – U10 | 50 x 30 yards | 60 x 40 yards |
| U11 – U12 | 70 x 40 yards | 80 x 50 yards |
| U13 – U14 | 90 x 50 yards | 100 x 60 yards |
| U15 – U16 | 90 x 50 yards | 110 x 70 yards |
| U17 + | 100 x 50 yards | 130 x 100 yards |

If there is a dispute over a pitch size, or goal size, please contact a league committee member before kick-off. We cannot resolve issues after a match has taken place.

Kit

If, in the opinion of the referee, two Teams have the same or similar colours, the away Team shall make the change. Should a Team delay the scheduled time of kick-off for a Competition Match by not having a change of colours they will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

Shirts must all be numbered differently, failing which a fine will be levied in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

Names of Youth Players shall not appear on the shirts, failing which a fine will be levied in accordance with the Fines Tariff.

Match Process and Referees

All you need to know about: Referees

Referees are an important part of a match day, but unfortunately, they're in short supply. Please make referees feel welcome before/on match day by:

- 1) BEFORE - Confirming the details of the fixture five days before the match. Please remember to advise if there are changing facilities available.
- 2) ON – Saying Hello!
- 3) ON – Advising them where the toilets and/or changing facilities are.
- 4) ON – Handing the referee a complete team-sheet 15 minutes prior to kick off!

Match Confirmation

The home team shall confirm on Full-Time the kick off time before 9am the previous Sunday, to allow for match officials to be appointed.

The match should be confirmed with the appointed official 5 days before the match. It is suggested that you send the match official a text/email at the same time you confirm the fixture with the opposing team.

Team Sheets

Clubs must provide the Referee with a copy of the full team sheet not later than 15 minutes prior to the scheduled kick off time. A team sheet is required for every match in every age group and every division, cup or trophy event.

Failure to do this is a breach of League Rule LR20.1.

The NCYFL has an easy-to-use Team Sheet Generator, accessible via the following link;

[Team Sheet Generator](#)

Please note that the RESPECT handshake should take place before each game.

Team sheets received by Clubs must be retained for the whole of the current season and must be supplied to the Competition within 5 days if such a request is made.

Match Official Fees

| Age Group | Referee | Assistants | Travel Expenses | Paid By |
|--------------------|---------|------------|----------------------------|------------|
| Mini-Soccer | £10 | | 35p a mile, maximum of £25 | Home team |
| U11 to U14* | £15 | £10 | 35p a mile, maximum of £25 | Home team |
| U15 & U16* | £20 | £15 | 35p a mile, maximum of £25 | Home team |
| U14 Prem | £15 | £10 | 35p a mile, maximum of £25 | Split fees |
| U15 Prem, U16 Prem | £20 | £15 | 35p a mile, maximum of £25 | Split fees |
| U18 | £25 | £18 | 35p a mile, maximum of £25 | Split fees |

If the referee has travelled to a fixture and arrives at the ground to find out that the fixture has been postponed, the referee is entitled to;

- A) If the call off has occurred and neither Club at fault – Expenses Only.
- B) If the call off has occurred and one Club is at fault – Full fees plus expenses are to be paid via the defaulting club.

Who pays for the referee in a cup/trophy event match?

Both teams, split evenly.

- *(9) The fee and expenses of Match official(s) relating to all cup matches (except for the final tie) shall be borne equally by both clubs.*

What is Power Play?

The U7 to U10 Divisions operate the 'Power Play' Ruling.

During a match when the goal difference reaches 4, the losing team may field an additional player. If the goal difference reaches 5, the losing team may field another additional player (taking the total up to 2 additional players). At the point the goal difference falls to 5, the losing team must withdraw one of their additional players. At the point the goal difference falls to 3 the losing team must withdraw their final additional player (this does not need to be the same player that was put on as the additional player).

This only applies in Development fixtures, it cannot be used in Trophy Event matches.

Duration of League & Cup Matches

| Format | Mins each way | Extra time each way | Penalties (Yes/No) |
|---|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| U7 & U8 Round Robin Development Fixture | 10 | | |
| U7 & U8 Single Development Fixture | 20 | | |
| U7 & U8 Trophy Event Fixtures | 20 | 5 | Yes |
| U9 & U10 Development Fixture | 25 | | |
| U9 & U10 Trophy Event Fixture | 25 | 5 - Only in Semi Final & Final | Only in Semi Final & Final |
| U11 Development Fixture | 30 | | |
| U11 Trophy Event Fixture | 30 | 5 - Only in Semi Final & Final | Only in Semi Final & Final |
| U12 League Fixture | 30 | | |
| U12 Cup Fixture | 30 | 10 | Yes |
| U13 & U14 League Fixture | 35 | | |
| U13 & U14 Cup Fixture | 35 | 10 | Yes |
| U15 & U16 League Fixture | 40 | | |
| U15 & U16 Cup Fixture | 40 | 10 | Yes |
| U17 & U18 League Fixture | 45 | | |
| U17 & U18 League Fixture | 45 | 15 | Yes |

U7 & U8 Single Development Fixture, and U9 & U10 Development Fixtures can be played as quarters if both teams agree to do so.

Referee Club Marks

Referees take their Club Marks seriously. If you believe the referees performance did not meet the required standards (i.e. you have scored the referee 60 or below) please complete the form below;

[Referee Low Mark Form](#)

This enables the NCFR Referee Department to make contact with the Match Official and advise them on how to potentially improve their game.

Please don't mark the referee down unfairly because your team was unlucky and lost the game or some disciplinary action was taken against your players.

What if I don't have a referee?

- *In cases where there are no officially appointed Match Officials in attendance, the Clubs shall agree upon a referee. An individual thus agreed upon shall, for that Competition Match, have the full powers, status and authority of a registered referee. Individuals under the age of 16 must not participate either as a referee or assistant referee in any open age competition and individuals under the age of 14 must not participate either as a referee or assistant referee in any Competition Match. Referees between the ages of 14 and 16 are only eligible to officiate in competitions where the Players' age band is at least one year younger than the age of the referee, for example a 15 year old referee may only officiate in competitions where the age banding is 14 or younger.*
- *The appointed referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the Ground in all Competition Matches and that decision shall be final, subject to the determination of the Local Authority or the owners of a Ground, which must be accepted.*
- *Further to Rule 23(B) it is ultimately the responsibility of the home Club to provide a Referee. In the event of the home team failing to do so they may be fined in accordance with Fines Tariff.*
- *The non-appointment of a Referee shall not be deemed sufficient cause for the match not being played.*
- *LR23.2 At every match, the home Club shall ensure that a whistle is available for use by the Referee and flags for use by the Assistant Referee.*

Whoever officiates a match has the same rights/role as an appointed qualified official. Any match official must be at least 14 years old, and must be an age older than the age group they are officiating in if they are between age 14-16. You must also ensure a whistle and flags are available at every match.

Miscellaneous Rules and Reminders

- *Kick off time shall be between 10.00am and 2.00pm with the home team having the right to determine the time, unless both teams agree to play at an alternative time and permission for this is given by the Management Committee.*
- *In development football, for those playing on Saturday, KO times to be between 10am and 12noon with the home team having the right to determine the time, unless both teams agree to play at an alternative time and permission for this is given by the Management Committee.*
- *Matches may only be played on any day of the week other than the usual match day as determined by the Competition with the agreement of both teams and the approval of the Management Committee.*

Matches on a Saturday must kick off between 10am and 12pm and Sunday 10am and 2pm, unless agreed by the opposition and age group secretary. Teams can agree to play midweek mutually with agreement from the age group secretary.

- *The Competition and Clubs are permitted to collect but NOT publish results or any grading tables for fixtures involving Under 7s, Under 8s, Under 9s, Under 10s, and Under 11s. Any Competition failing to abide by this Rule will be dealt with by the Sanctioning Authority, and any Club failing to abide by this Rule will be fined in accordance with the Fines Tariff). The Competition and Clubs are permitted to collect and publish results for trophy events.*

This includes publishing results on social media. This also applies to parents and carers.

- *In the event of teams being equal on points the team which has the better playing record against the other team in head to head Competition matches during the Season will be the highest placed team.*

Goal difference is not used in youth football. Head-to-head record applies instead. If head-to-head record is equal, then a play-off match will take place.