

STANDARD GCFA JUNIOR LEAGUE RULES

1. COMPETITION

The League will operate divisions, based upon demand, and may combine with other League/s for individual division.

- a. Competitive Football (11-a-side) - Under 14, Under 15 and Under 16.
- b. Competitive Football (9-a-side) - Under 12 and Under 13
- c. Where the League decides to play at two-year age groups then divisions shall be Under 12, Under 14 and Under 16.
- d. Non-Competitive Small-Sided Football - Up to Under 11.

The number of clubs accepted into each division shall be at the discretion of the League Management Committee. All players must be under the age as defined by the division on the 31st August at the commencement of the season.

To enter a Competition, each team must have a minimum of players as follows: Under 12 & Under 13 – eleven players (nine plus two substitutes). Under 14, Under 15 & Under 16 – thirteen players (eleven plus two substitutes).

Teams must have this number of players registered on Comet and included on their roster for all Competitions, no later than seven (7) days before the first game of each season. Failure to have these numbers will result in matches not being played and regarded as broken fixtures until such time as the required numbers are signed on the team roster.

In normal circumstances, the league will run one division at each group with teams playing each other twice on a home and away basis, with championship points awarded as below. The League has the discretion to vary this where circumstances require it. That is where there is a very high or very low demand for entry into a particular division. In such cases the league will notify member clubs of how the competition winners and runners up are to be determined before the commencement of the season.

For competitive matches championship points will be awarded as follows:

- i. Win - Three (3) points to the winning team
- ii. Drawn Matches - One (1) point to each team

The team having the greatest number of points in a division shall be declared winners of that division and the team with the next greatest number of points shall be declared runners-up. In the event of two, or more, teams in the same division having the same number of points then the league shall use the head-to-head results to determine the League winners; if the clubs still cannot be separated. then the League shall arrange play-off games to determine the division winners and runners up. Goal difference shall not be counted.

2. CLUBS APPLYING TO JOIN LEAGUE

The League will only accept applications from clubs based within the area of the league as defined in the Constitution.

Clubs from outside of a league area applying to join that league will not normally be allowed to do so except in exceptional circumstances. The Gwent County Football Association may only approve such applications.

Clubs must apply before 30th June each year and will be accepted into the league at the discretion of the League Management Committee and will be notified of their acceptance or otherwise within one week of the League Meeting. All clubs applying will be expected to attend a meeting with the League before their acceptance into the League can be considered.

Clubs wishing to enter the League will be required to supply evidence that they are properly formulated, have a club constitution that meets the needs to all their players, coaches and volunteers, must specify who the members of the club are and their voting rights, must include a documented disciplinary process including the right of appeal to any sanctions imposed. In addition, the club must have properly formulated Safeguarding policies that are compliant with FAW regulations, have a code of conduct that is available to all members and

must be able to prove their financial solvency. All of the club documents must be available to all members and the League upon request.

The League may accept late applications from clubs but clubs applying to join a league after the commencement of the current playing season will only be allowed to join if there is a vacancy, i.e. an odd number of teams in a division.

Clubs making false statements in support of their application to join a league will be fined as in Appendix A.

3. CLUB DETAILS

Within 14 days of their acceptance into the league, each club shall forward to the League Secretary full details, including name, address and telephone number and Email address of club officials. Failure to comply, will result in a fine as in Appendix A.

4. CLUB COLOURS

Each club will Registered teams' colours onto the COMET system.

No club will be allowed to play in black or navy shirts. If there is a clash of colours, the away team must change.

Goalkeepers shall play in colours distinct from members of both teams.

5. CLUB GROUNDS

Each club in the League shall register its ground with the League and shall not use another ground for home matches unless by agreement of the League Secretary. Where a club has insufficient pitches for all the competitive age group teams separate home grounds for separate teams are permissible provided agreement with the League is obtained. Where a Club has multiple teams and insufficient pitches at their nominated club home ground, and individual team can nominate or be allocated an alternative ground which will be classed as their home ground for the season. This may be changed annually. It is the club's responsibility to ensure all home grounds are registered on COMET for each team.

The League will not be responsible for the safe custody of the club, players or officials' property. When in any dressing accommodation, whether hired to the club or the League, it is the responsibility of the club, person or official concerned.

6. WITHDRAWALS

Teams withdrawing may be liable to a withdrawal fee as in Appendix A. The withdrawal fee applies to all age groups including Small sided teams (Minis).

7. FIXTURES

7.1 All league fixtures will be arranged by the league. Matches played without the consent of the league will be declared void and the League Management Committee will deal with the offending clubs.

7.2 Clubs failing to inform the League of a change of ground for a League game will be fined as per Appendix A.

7.3 In all cases league and cup matches shall take precedence over friendly games.

8. PLAYER REGISTRATION

All players must be registered by their club on the Football Association of Wales COMET System and have had issued a digital FAW registration card and COMET ID before they can play in any Junior League.

COMET registration details for players and coaches MUST be available for inspection at all league and cup games.

Players are registered to the club for life unless deregistered or transferred. The registration period is the 1st June to the last Thursday in March inclusive.

Clubs are responsible for ensuring that a player is free to register for them and is not under suspension.

Clubs are responsible to ensure that a head and shoulders photograph of the player is cropped to the Comet

System, maintained, and kept up to date throughout the period of the players registration.

Players must reside within the area of the Gwent County Football Association subject to the FIFA rules concerning players living within 50km of a Country's external border, i.e. Wales/England.

The player is not deemed registered until the player has received an electronic registration and COMET ID from the FAW. It is the club's responsibility to make sure they have enough player registered to fulfil any league/cup fixtures.

In competitive age groups, where a club enters multiple teams in the same competitive age group, then, for the purposes of player registration, the teams will be treated as separate clubs and players may register and play for one team only. As such, players may only be listed on one team roster on COMET.

Any player wishing to move from one club's team to another within the same competitive age groups must apply to the league secretary for a transfer. Normal FAW transfer rules will apply.

Any player removed from a roster, other than to be transferred. MUST have their registration terminated on Comet.

All Clubs/Teams must fill in the team roster on the COMET system before the start of the season. players can be added to roster during season. Only League Secretaries are allowed to alter/amend a team roster.

All competing teams must complete a team roster on Comet, for each competition they have entered, which includes cup competitions.

Team rosters will be locked at the beginning of the season on the 1st September by the League.

Under 12s and under 13s can only have a maximum of 20 player registered on team rosters and only take maximum of 18 players to any fixture. Under 14s.15s and 16s can only have a maximum of 25 players registered on team rosters and only take a maximum of 18 players to any fixture.

Clubs playing a player who is not registered on a roster with the COMET system will be charged with playing an ineligible player.

Players can only register for ONE TEAM irrespective whether the team plays in a competitive age group/division run by the parent league or a joint division with another league. This also applies when the age group competition is split into two divisions by either the parent league or a joint competition with another league.

9. ONE PLAYER, ONE CLUB FOR PLAYERS UNDER 6 TO UNDER 11

Academy:

Players in the Under 6 to Under 11 age groups will be permitted to register with a Junior Club whilst continuing to attend training sessions and Closed Friendly Matches only for a recognised FAW Academy without being registered. The FAW recognises the value that continuing to participate with friends at a Junior Club, whilst still benefiting from training at a recognised FAW Academy will bring.

Definition of a Closed Friendly Match:

A game of Association Football or a modified version of the game which is not an Official Match which is played between two (2) teams (whether or not from different Clubs) but is not made open for the public to attend. (no parents can watch).

10. REGULATIONS AFFECTING PLAYERS UNDER THE AGE OF 16 ON 31st AUGUST AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF EACH SEASON

No player may play senior football until their sixteenth birthday. Note that rule applies until the end of the season in which the player is 16.

When a player reaches the age of 16, he/she may register for a jointly affiliated senior team in the pyramid system and continue to play for his junior team. This will apply until the end of the season in which the player reaches 16. Any player wishing to play senior football for any other club will not be able to continue playing junior football

Players wishing to play senior football must register in accordance with the FAW COMET system and the rules of the senior league in which the player wishes to play.

11. TRANSFER OF PLAYERS

Players wishing to transfer between clubs must comply with the COMET approved transfer process, this includes transferring from one team's roster to another team's roster.

Players wishing to transfer between junior teams (U12 to U16 age groups) within the same club shall complete a league transfer form, which is available from the League Secretary at a cost of £5.00. Players are only allowed two transfers per season.

No transfer applications will be considered after the last Thursday in March

Note: Where a player holds kit belonging to, or owes monies to, or is in any way in dispute with the existing club, then clubs must enter such details on the further information/notes section within the COMET transfer registration process. The FAW will take such comments into account when determining whether the transfer is to be allowed or refused.

12. DAYS AND TIMES OF KICK OFF

The League will notify clubs before the commencement of each season match days and times of kick offs. The League will reserve the right to vary the time of kick off of individual games dependent upon the availability of the facility.

The League will endeavor to allocate KO times when fixtures are released. The League decision will be final on a KO time and the game must go ahead or be dealt with as a broken fixture.

The League's Under 12 to Under 16s will be notified of the date of the first fixture by the League Secretary. If clubs have one venue available, the League will accept a kick-off time agreeable between the two clubs. The league holds the right to set an alternative KO time, and this decision will be final.

Where possible, the Under 6s to Under 9s teams will attend central venue locations at the designated time slots available.

Under 6's to Under 11s will commence in September; the League will notify the clubs of the date of the first fixture. If clubs have one venue available, the League will accept a kick-off time agreeable between the two clubs. *The league holds the right to set an alternative KO time, and this decision will be final.*

Clubs wishing to kick off a league fixture at a different time to what is scheduled must apply to the League Secretary in writing, with a copy to their opponents, 7 days prior to the date of the match concerned. In case of one club objecting then the fixture will be played at the time notified by the league.

Explanation of kick-off times, bringing games forward and reversing games

- i. No club can rearrange a fixture for a later date. A postponement application is required, and if accepted then the league will rearrange the fixture.
- ii. Bringing games forward does not require a postponement application, but it does require sanction from the league (see variation of days and kick-off times above).
- iii. Clubs may request to kick-off at a different time or play the fixture on an earlier date. For instance, where there is ground congestion. This is subject to agreement with the opponents and needs sanction from the league.
- iv. A club may wish to request a reversal of a league fixture to the opponent's ground subject to agreement with the opponents and the sanction of the league. The reciprocal away fixture will be reversed as well. Note, cup games are automatically reversed if a ground is unavailable or unfit to play.
- v. Scheduling of mid-week dates to Friday allows extra flexibility to kick-off on earlier dates for midweek games should this be required. This is subject to agreement with the opponents and the sanction of the league.

13. REFEREE & ASSISTANT REFEREES

13.1 Referees in all matches for all divisions when available will be appointed by the League. Referees appointed by the League must accept or reject within 48 hours. This process is carried out on COMET. The Gwent County Football Association will determine the referee's fee and expenses. The home and

away club will equally share the payment of the referee's fee and expenses. Clubs will be notified if a referee has been appointed.

Where the League has not appointed a referee, or the appointed referee fails to turn up for the game, the home club will appoint a suitable person to referee the game. This person needs to have a DBS validated through the FAW that has not expired, and hold a COMET registration card and COMET ID.

GCFA referees can referee a junior club game as a parent or volunteer referee but there are limitations to this, namely,

- a) Conflicts of interest must be declared to the league before they officiate. Examples of conflict of interest are:
 - The referee is a coach or player with the club
 - The referee has a relative or family member as part of the club
- b) Both teams must agree to the person refereeing the match prior to kick off.
- c) The entire game must be refereed by that person (not one half and the away team the other)
- d) They cannot wear referees kit, just a tracksuit and bib.
- e) They must be listed on Comet as a Club Appointed Referee
- f) Failure to comply will result in a fine as in Appendix A

Clubs asking for specific referees to be listed to officiate games due to local knowledge and/or arrangements with them will find such requests refused and should refer to the point above.

13.2 Explanation of Match Day Procedure for Club Referees and Assistant Referees

To get the most effective use of club referees and assistant referees, the following procedure should be adopted:

- a) Home team must appoint a suitable person to act as referee, if one is not appointed by the league. They **MUST** have an FAW validated DBS that has not expired and FAW/COMET ID.
- b) Both teams must appoint a suitable person to act as assistant referee who must not be changed without informing the referee.
- c) These three persons are then acting on behalf of the Gwent County Football Association.
- d) The referee must acquaint himself/herself with the assistants.
- e) The referee must not start the game until he/she has satisfied him/herself that the assistants are in position.
- f) The officials must take a zero tolerance to foul and/or abusive language.
- g) Any player using foul and/or abusive language must be sent from the field of play immediately and reported via the COMET APP.
- h) Any manager/coach that uses foul and/or abusive language must be removed from the field of play and the game must not restart until the said person is back in the changing rooms or well away from the pitch. The person must be reported to the Gwent County Football Association.
- i) All reports from referees must be submitted online.
- j) Any official not adhering to the above will not be allowed to officiate in any further games and clubs will be charged with misconduct.
- k) The only reports that will be accepted are from the referee and/or the club
- l) No reports will be accepted from parents or spectators.
- m) The Club's COMET registration details of all players and all Coaches must be available for inspection at each match otherwise clubs may be fined as directed by the league.
- n) The only individuals allowed in the buffer zone are, the Club's registered players as named on the team sheet, together with coaches, team helpers and first aiders registered with the Club on Comet.

No game to be postponed because of the lack of a referee. If a game is not played because no referee is available then the league, at its discretion, may charge the home club with breaking a fixture.

If the league does not appoint assistant referees, then both the home and away clubs will each supply a suitable person to act as assistant referee. The home club shall be responsible for supplying flags for both assistant referees.

The role allotted to Assistant Referees is to signal WHEN the ball is ENTIRELY over the touchline, and to indicate WHICH side is entitled to the throw-in, subject always to the decision of the Referee.

14. NOTIFYING OF HOME GROUND

The nominated home ground for a game is listed on COMET for each fixture. The Home Club must notify the visitors and referee (if appointed) by email or by telephone at least 72 hours preceding the match, confirming details of the arrangements.

When email is used clubs MUST check that there has been a response from the opponents. Clubs failing to confirm will be fined the sum as in Appendix A.

In the event of non-receipt of notification, the opposing club and referee to obtain the information and submit a report to the League Secretary.

Non-receipt of notification will not be accepted as an excuse for not playing the match.

15. COLOURS

Teams must not play in black on navy shirts. The Away club to change in the event of a clash of colours, except where the home club intends to play in colours not registered with the league. In such cases the home club shall change. Teams may only play in colours approved by the League.

16. DURATION OF COMPETITIVE MATCHES

UNDER 12, UNDER 13 and UNDER 14: 35 minutes in each half.

UNDER 15 and UNDER 16: 40 minutes in each half.

17. THE BALL

The home team will be responsible for supplying the match ball which should be in good condition, the size should be as follows:

UNDER 12 and 13: Size 4

UNDER 14, UNDER 15 & UNDER 16: Size 5

Failure to provide a ball of the size required will result in a fine as in Appendix A.

18. CORNER FLAGS & NETS

These must be provided and erected by the home club. Nets and corner flags to be in accordance with the laws of the game. Clubs not providing or erecting nets and corner flags will be fined as in Appendix A.

19. SUBSTITUTES

A Club may, at its discretion, use a substitute player at any time in a match for any reason except to replace a player who has been suspended from the game by the Referee. The substitution can only be made when play has stopped for any reason, and only after the referee has given permission.

Up to Seven named substitutes are allowed in all competitive age groups. Substitutes must be named in the team line-up prior to kick-off.

A player who has been substituted himself/herself 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.

20. LATE STARTS

The referee is to report clubs responsible for delaying the start of the game to the League Management Committee. Clubs deemed responsible for the late start will be fined as in Appendix A.

21. RESULTS/MATCH REPORT/TEAM LINE UP

- a) Both clubs involved in each scheduled fixture are responsible for submitting and confirming their team line up. Teams who fail to submit and confirm their team line on the COMET APP at least fifteen (15) minutes before the kick-off will be fined as in Appendix A.
- b) Clubs MUST only confirm line-up on the day of the match. Any club/team who confirm team before the day of the match will be fined as in Appendix A.
- c) **Home Clubs must enter the result of the game on COMET straight after the game and no later than 2 hours from the termination of the game.** Clubs not complying will be fined as in Appendix A.
- d) Clubs falsifying a match report sheet will be fined as per Appendix A.
- e) Mercy Rule on instruction from FAW. When one team is ahead by eight (8) goals, the match is declared over, the score is recorded on Comet and any remaining game time is to be played out as a friendly. For example, a scoreline may finish 8-0, 9-1, 10-2. Coaches are encouraged to use interventions to challenge players appropriately during unbalanced fixtures to aid player development. Clubs failing to adhere to this rule will be fined as in Appendix A.

MATCH DAY PROTOCOLS AND COMET

- Select your team line-up on COMET APP and submit them as per COMET rules, so the opposition and League can see them. This must be done, at the game, by a Club Official
- Home side is responsible for starting and stopping the match timer. If the match timer is started early, then the following link shows how to correct or reset it:
<https://COMETsupport.faw.cymru/clubs/com>
- It is not a requirement to enter goal scorers; goal times or assists on Live Reporting. The only things that have to be entered are red and yellow cards. This will make things considerably easier for team's pitch side - especially when the weather deteriorates, or venues with bad mobile signal coverage. competition-management/using-match-timer-COMET-football-app/
- Once the score has been entered the home side can tap the Full-Time button.
- At some point after the score has been reviewed the match status will be changed by the League competition manager to PLAYED and the result will then go onto the League table.
- Only an official referee or the Competition Manager can change the status to PLAYED.

Please note a maximum of 18 players can be selected from the roster for the match day team line-up in all competitive fixtures.

22. CAUTIONS AND SENDING'S OFF

All Cautions and Sending off must be reported on the COMET APP by the Referee. The home club shall be responsible for ensuring that any club referee appointed reports the matter as above.

23. POSTPONEMENT OF FIXTURES

If a postponement of any league fixture is required, application must be made in writing and be in possession of the League Secretary, at least fourteen (14) days before the match is to be played. A fee of £15.00 will be charged for competitive and Small-Sided fixture postponement. **The unavailability of a qualified person is not classed as a reason to postpone a fixture.**

The League Secretary will then notify both teams of the postponement, if agreed to. This rule will not apply when pitches are declared unfit for play.

If a club's players are selected to play in a fixture for the Gwent County FA representative side, then the club can ask for a postponement of their fixture if two or more of the club's outfield players are selected or the club's goalkeeper.

24. POSTPONEMENTS DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER

In the event of a postponement of a league fixture due to inclement weather the home club to notify visitors, referee, and the League on the day of the match. **Both Clubs must telephone or email the League Secretary/Fixture Secretary as soon as a decision is made.** In the event of pitches being unfit for play, then matches may be switched to private grounds or 3G pitches. Providing both parties are in agreement for this to take place and the league are notified of changes.

25. BREAKING A FIXTURE

Teams charged with breaking a fixture shall be dealt with by the League Management Committee. The offending team shall have up to three (3) points deducted from their total of points and fined as in Appendix A. They will also be liable for any costs incurred by their opponents.

The offending team shall be fined the sum as in Appendix A for the first and second offence. A team committing a third offence will be liable to a fine as in Appendix A and such disciplinary action the Management Committee may determine, including expulsion from the League.

In all cases the game will be either rescheduled or awarded to the non-offending team as determined by the League Management Committee.

Where only one team turns up for a scheduled fixture that team and the referee (if appointed), shall wait at the ground until 30 minutes after the scheduled kick off time. If the opponents do not turn up during this period, the team may then accept that the fixture will not be played, and they may leave the ground. They must immediately report the matter to the league by telephone and confirm all details in writing within three days. Non-receipt of such reports not to prevent the league taking action if it deems the fixture has been broken.

26. TEAMS LEAVING THE FIELD

This is covered under the rule for Abandoned Games. Refer to Rule 31.4

27. INELIGIBLE PLAYERS

Any club playing an ineligible player in a competitive game shall be dealt with as follows:

- a) **When the winning team plays an ineligible player:** The match shall be awarded to the non-offending club and this result will be recorded as 1-0.
- b) **When the losing team plays an ineligible player:** The result of the game will stand and the goals scored by the losers shall be disallowed.
- c) **In drawn matches where one club plays an ineligible player:** The match shall be awarded to the non-offending club and the result will be recorded as 1-0.
- d) **When both teams play an ineligible player:** The match shall be declared a 0-0 draw and no points shall be awarded.

The defaulting club shall pay such expenses of opponents as the league direct and shall be fined as in Appendix A.

Any player taking part in a match in which he/she is not eligible, shall be reported to the Gwent County FA. He/she is also liable to have his registration cancelled at the discretion of the League Executive Committee.

28. SEARCH OF REGISTER

Should doubt arise as to the eligibility of any player, the League Secretary will give such registered information as necessary, or required, on payment of a fee of £20.00 per player. All applications will be made in writing and must be accompanied by the fee. This will not constitute a protest, which should be made in the usual way. Frivolous requests being proved, fee will be retained.

29. PROTESTS/COMPLAINTS

Protests must be lodged with the League Secretary by Email within 7 days of the match to which they refer to, the club must pay a £25.00 protests fee into the leagues bank account, if the Committee deem the protests frivolous, the fee will be forfeited.

The protest must be confined to the infringement of rules contained herein. The club protesting must provide all necessary evidence to support their protest – this to include all statements which must be in writing. Such statements must bear the name and address of the person making the statement and must be signed. Such persons must be prepared to attend any hearing as required. If individuals are referred to in the protest their full names must be given.

30. CONDUCT

The League Management Committee shall have powers to deal with any offending club or clubs on infringing the rules contained herein. **The Gwent County FA will deal with all cases of misconduct by clubs, players, officials or spectators.** All offending clubs will be invited to attend disciplinary hearings.

If there is a misconduct issue in a game where there is a referee (club referee or Association referee), the referee should send the misconduct report to the GCFA Disciplinary Officer Kevin Jones, on the Report Form available on our website www.gwentcountyfa.co.uk/forms.

If an away team makes a complaint of alleged misconduct by an opposition team, where there is no referee i.e. small sided football, or where there is an Association Referee/Club Referee who, either did not see the alleged misconduct, or is not sending in a report of misconduct, the complaint must be forwarded to GCFA Disciplinary Secretary Kevin Jones, accompanied by the standard fee of £50.00, returnable if the complaint is upheld. If, at the hearing, it is found that the referee did not send in a report of misconduct, even though he/she witnessed the incident, he/she will be charged with failing to carry out the duties of a referee.

If a team makes a complaint of an alleged safeguarding issue by an opposition team – the complaint must be given to the Safeguarding Officer of the complainants Club to investigate and decide if it is a safeguarding issue or misconduct. If the Safeguarding Officer of the Club decides it is misconduct, the complaint must be forwarded to the GCFA Disciplinary Secretary, accompanied by the standard fee of £50.00, returnable if the complaint is upheld. If the Club Safeguarding Officer decides it is a Safeguarding issue and cannot resolve the complaint, then the complaint must be forwarded to the League Safeguarding Officer for he/she to investigate. If the Leagues Safeguarding Officer decides it is misconduct, then he/she should return the complaint to the Club for them to send to the GCFA Disciplinary Secretary Kevin Jones accompanied by the standard fee of £50.00, refundable if the complaint is upheld. If the League Safeguarding Officer decides it is a Safeguarding issue and cannot resolve the issue, then the complaint must be forwarded to the GCFA Safeguarding Officer Stephen Brooks for a final decision on how the complaint could be resolved.

Please note the following: Clubs who have their complaint upheld, will have their £50.00 returned. At any hearing, if it is found a Club Referee failed to report misconduct, he/she will be charged with failing to carry out his/her refereeing duties.

31. ABANDONED GAMES

31.1 CAUSED BY LATE START:

If a late start is the cause of a match being left unfinished, the League Management Committee shall determine if the result at the time the match finished shall stand.

31.2 CAUSED BY INCLEMENT WEATHER:

When a match is abandoned due to inclement weather, the League Management Committee shall determine if the result at the time the match finished shall stand.

31.3 CAUSED BY MISCONDUCT OF A CLUB(S):

Any match abandoned by the Match Official due to indiscipline of a Club or Clubs must be reported by the match Official to the Gwent County Football Association with a copy of the report sent to the League Secretary. The Gwent County Football Association shall issue a charge of misconduct to the offending club/s. The Gwent County Football Association shall inform the League of the outcome of the Disciplinary Hearing. Any Club found guilty by the Area Football Association of having caused the abandonment of a match may have up to three (3) points deducted from its League record by the League Management Committee. Furthermore, the League Management Committee shall determine the result of the match as they deem fit or have the match replayed. If both Clubs are found guilty by the Area

Association, the League Management Committee may at its absolute discretion declare the match VOID and order that it be replayed.

31.4 CAUSED BY TEAM LEAVING THE FIELD OF PLAY:

In the event of any club leaving the field of play, without the permission of the referee, the Match Official must send a report to the Gwent County Football Association with a copy of the report sent to the League Secretary. A charge of misconduct shall be issued to the offending club/s by the Gwent County Football Association. The Gwent County Football Association will inform the League of the outcome of the Disciplinary Hearing and the result of the match shall be decided at the discretion of the League Management Committee, irrespective of the time played. The offending club may have up to three (3) points deducted from its League record.

31.5 CAUSED BY AN INJURY TO A PLAYER IN THE FIELD OF PLAY:

When a match is abandoned due to an injury to a player, the League Management Committee shall determine if the result at the time the match finished shall stand or the game is replayed.

32. FINES

All fines must be paid within 7 business days of receiving notice from the League or the offending club will be placed under suspension until such time as the fine is paid, the only exception being, when the offending club has given notice in writing of an appeal. All payments are to be made by bank transfer payable.

33. APPEALS

Any club being dissatisfied with the decision of the League Management Committee may appeal to the Gwent County FA enclosing their fee. Appeals to be made within time limits laid down by the Gwent County FA in their Constitution Handbook.

34. TROPHIES AND MEDALS

For competitive divisions, and where funds permit, the League to present a maximum of 18 medals to the winners and a maximum of 18 medals to the runners up in each competitive age group league. If the league run more than one division per age group, the league will present a maximum of 18 medals to winners only in each division.

Additional medals may be provided for each club if requested. The league will require the cost of additional medals to be borne by the requesting club.

35. CUSTODY OF SHIELDS AND CUPS

Clubs who hold League Trophies are required to insure the trophy or trophies they hold for their full value. Clubs to furnish to the league the names of two responsible persons who will act as trustees for the league trophies held by the club. The club shall pay the repair costs for any trophy damaged whilst in possession of the club, or if repair is not possible, shall provide a new replacement trophy as directed by the league. Failure to return Cups/Trophies when requested will be fined as per Appendix A.

36. REPRESENTATIVE AND INTER LEAGUE MATCHES

The league shall enter any inter-league competition arranged by the Gwent County FA. The League Management Committee shall have the power to arrange special matches, the proceeds of which shall be devoted to the General Funds of the League.

Any player selected to play under the auspices of the League in Inter-League games or otherwise, and failing or refusing to do so, shall, in the absence of good and sufficient cause, be dealt with at the discretion of the League Management Committee. Any club that shall be found to have encouraged or instigated such conduct on the part of a player shall be deemed guilty of misconduct and shall be dealt with at the discretion of the League Management Committee.

Leagues may decide their own criteria for the selection of their representative squads and the recruitment of representative team managers and coaches.

37. TOURNAMENTS and FESTIVALS

Before any Competition/Tournament/Festival can take place, the organising Club must apply to the Secretary of the Gwent County Football Association for permission to stage the Competition/Tournament/Festival or Event giving 14 days' notice. Form 'E' must be completed, and the appropriate fee paid. A list of clubs playing in the

Competition/Tournament/Event must be provided. All teams that enter the Competition must have a current affiliation number and any team from outside of Wales must also produce a letter of authority to enter from their respective National Association. Copy of such letters must accompany the Form "E".

Any Club wishing to play in a Competition/Tournament/Festival outside the area of Gwent must apply for permission to the Secretary of the Gwent County Football Association giving 14 days' notice.

Competitions outside of Wales will also require sanction from the Football Association of Wales. The Gwent County Football Association Secretary will obtain this sanction for the club.

Any Club failing to observe the above procedure will be liable to be fined and sanctions on the Club may be imposed by the Gwent County Football Association. Competitions/Tournaments/Events must not interfere with League/Cup commitments.

38. **DISBANDED CLUBS**

The players of any disbanded team, which has discharged its liabilities to the League, shall be eligible to register for any other club in the League immediately withdrawal of such team is accepted by the League Management Committee. The results of matches for disbanded teams to be completely eliminated from the League records. Once all outstanding fees and fines (both League & County FA) have been paid the League Secretary must forward a list of the players to the Football Association of Wales to enable the registrations to be deactivated.

39. **RULEBOOKS**

A copy of the rulebook will be made available for clubs and coaches. **A plea of not having a rulebook or not having knowledge of the rules, shall not be accepted as a plea of clemency if any charge be made against the team.**

40. **CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMUNICATION WITH THE LEAGUE**

All communications with the League must be in writing/email from the club secretary, the league reserves the right not to act on correspondence received from any person other than the club secretary.

Clubs failing to answer correspondence from the league within seven (7) business days will be liable to a fine as in Appendix A.

Email will only be accepted in the following circumstances:

The email address must have been lodged with the League Secretary at the start of the season. The email must have a signed letter on the clubs Letterhead attached, or should be followed up with a signed letter on club letterhead within three (3) days.

All telephone communications with the league must be confirmed in writing, by the club secretary, within three days. The league reserves the right not to act on telephone communications until such confirmation is received. **No telephone calls to be made to League Officials, Club Secretaries or Team Managers after 9:00pm unless by prior arrangement.**

41. **FRIENDLY MATCHES**

A friendly match may only be arranged when the team concerned has no prior commitment in the league or league cup competitions.

For friendly matches against:

- a. Teams within the same league area - Permission from the League Secretary
- b. Teams outside the league area, but within Gwent - Permission from the League Secretary and Gwent County Football Association.
- c. Teams outside of Gwent but within Wales - as (b)
- d. Teams outside Wales - as (c) plus the Football Association of Wales

In all cases initial requests must be submitted to the League Secretary/Gwent County FA Secretary at least 14 days prior to the date of the match. Failure to give sufficient notice may result in permission being refused. A club guilty of playing matches without permission will be reported to the Gwent County Football Association.

42. BEHIND THE LINE – BUFFER ZONES

Buffer zones alongside all Junior football pitches both small-sided football and competitive football **are mandatory for all games**. Clubs failing to provide a buffer zone are liable to a fine as in Appendix A.

- a) The buffer zone runs parallel to touchline of the pitch, ideally 2 metres from both sides. A smaller buffer zone can be used where space does not allow 2 metres.
- b) The buffer zone should be marked by cones, or additional marked line, or a rope- based respect barrier with plastic posts.
- c) Only Club registered players, designated Club registered coaches and Club registered First Aider are allowed within the buffer zone.
- d) All parents and other spectators must watch from behind the buffer zone lines.
- e) Where a senior pitch is used with metal barriers, the metal barrier forms the buffer zone, all spectators must watch from behind these barriers.
- f) No spectators are allowed to stand on the goal line or behind the goal.

43. ALTERATION TO RULES

No alteration shall be made to these rules except by the Gwent County Football Association. Clubs wishing to propose rule changes must do so in writing to the League Secretary prior to 1st February each season. Leagues to hold a Rules Revision Meeting specially convened for that purpose in March of each season when proposals from Clubs and those, if any, proposed by the League Management Committee will be voted upon.

Proposals receiving the assent of at least two thirds of the members present at the Rules Revision Meeting shall then be forwarded by the League Secretary to the Secretary of the Gwent County FA. These may then be approved or rejected by the Gwent County FA in May of each year. Rule changes made by the Gwent County FA shall become operative at the commencement of the following season.

44. CHANGES TO COMET SYSTEM

Please note that Rules may be subject to changes in COMET system processes.

45. GIRLS

Starting season 2023/24 Individual girls or girls' teams can request permission to play down up to a maximum two years within a boys or mixed league / team. Permission is to be managed on a case-by-case basis as outlined within the regulations below.

- a) Individual girls can request permission to play down up to a maximum of two years within a boys/mixed team playing in our league, at ages under 12 – under 17. For example, an U12 girl can request permission to play within an U10 boys' team / mixed league. For a junior girl to play down two years in a boys/mixed team, a written letter outlining the rationale must be sent to the relevant League Secretary.
- b) Any junior girls' team aged under 12 – under 17, can request to play up to a maximum of two years down within a mixed / boys junior league. Any girls team with permission to do so, must conform to the playing format of the respective league age group. For example, an under 14 girls team playing in an under 12 mixed/boys league must play the 9v9 format. For a junior girls' team wanting to play down two years in a boys/mixed league, a written letter outlining rationale must be sent to the relevant league secretary and signed by the club secretary and be subject to approval by the relevant area association.

46. MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR

Any matter arising, which is not provided for in these rules shall be dealt with at the discretion of the League Management Committee and shall be reported to the Gwent County Football Association.

Appendix A

Rule	Brief Outline of Offence	Fine
2	Clubs making false statement	£20.00
3	Not notifying league of club information	£10.00
6	Withdrawal fee	Maximum £100.00
7.2	Failing to notify the league of a home ground change	£10.00
14	Failing to notify the visitors of home ground	£10.00
17	Failure to provide match ball of the correct size	£10.00
18	Failure to provide corner flags, nets & Assistant referees flags	£10.00
20	Late starts First offence	£10.00
	Second offence	£20.00
	Third offence up-to	£30.00
21a	Failure to confirm and submit their team on the Comet App	£30.00
21b	Failure to confirm lineup on day of match	£20.00
21c	Failure to update result on Comet within timeframe	£15.00
21d	Falsifying a match report	£25.00
21e	Failure to abide by FAW Mercy Rule	£30.00
25	Teams breaking a fixture First offence	£25.00
	Second offence	£50.00
	Third offence	£75.00
27	Teams playing an ineligible player	£50.00
28	Search of register	£10.00
29	Protests	£50.00
35	Failure to return cups and trophies	£10.00
40	Failure to answer correspondence	£10.00
42	Failure to provide a Buffer Zone First Offence	£25.00
	Second Offence	£50.00