

COMPETITION RULES

The Tournament will be played on the basis of one or two leagues in each age group. The top teams of each league will progress through to either a semi-final or the final.

There will be U7 and U8 Festivals with no semi finals or finals.

All teams can expect to play a minimum of 4 matches (subject only to late withdrawals); however, the tournament committee reserves the right to amend the format for an age group where this is deemed necessary.

All teams must be ready to start their matches on time. In the event of a team not being ready, the referee will wait for **two minutes** and if play is still not able to commence, the opposing team will be awarded the win and 3 points.

1. Eligibility of Players

- 1.1 All teams must be registered at least 30 minutes prior to kick-off time of the first match in their respective age group. Once registered, no player may play for any other team in the tournament at that age group.
- 1.2 Qualifying ages for the 2015/2016 season apply.
- 1.3 Any team who registers or plays an over age player will be disqualified from the tournament and matches will be awarded to scheduled opponents with 3 points.
- 1.4 The tournament is a Hampshire FA sanctioned tournament. All teams are required to be from clubs affiliated to their respective county FA and to provide their affiliation number. Any issue regarding league player eligibility must be declared by the manager on arrival at the Control Tent on the day of play.

2. Rules of Play

Normal FA Laws of the Game will apply except:

- 2.1 No off-sides.
- 2.2 With the exception of Under 7s, Under 8s and Under 9s, goal-keepers shall return the ball into play at all times using a throw. There is no restriction on the type of throw.

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- 2.3 Goal kicks shall be a throw in from the base-line in the goal area. Under 7, Under 8 and Under 9 goal-keepers can return the ball into play at all times by kicking from hand. For Under 7 and 8 the usual retreat to half way will be in operation when the goalkeeper has the ball.
- 2.4 The pass-back rule applies to all age groups as it does during the current season.
- 2.5 Opponents must retreat at least 3 metres from any dead ball situation.
- 2.6 Rolling substitutions will be allowed at all age groups.
- 2.7 Under 7s, 8s and 9s shall play with a size 3 football.
- 2.8 Under 10s to 14s shall play with a size 4 football.
- 2.9 All other age groups shall play with a size 5 football.

3. Teams and Substitutions

- 3.1 Under 7s and Under 8s may register up to 10 players prior to commencement of the tournament. Each team will comprise 5 players and up to 5 substitutes.
- 3.2 Under 9s to Under 13s may register up to 9 players prior to commencement of the tournament. Girls are eligible for U13 and below. Each team will comprise 6 players and up to 3 substitutes.
- 3.3 Under 14s, 15s and Under 16s may register up to 8 players prior to commencement of the tournament. Each team will comprise 5 players and up to 3 substitutes.
- 3.4 Substitutes may be used at the manager's discretion at any time in the match provided play has stopped and the referee has been informed.

4. Match Duration

- 4.1 All matches will start with a kick-off following a coin toss. The captain of the first named team will call "heads" or "tails", the 'winner' having choice of ends, the 'loser' will kick-off.

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- 4.2 All league matches, quarter finals and semi-finals will be 9 minutes one-way.
- 4.3 Finals will be 6 minutes each-way.
- 4.4 If a quarter final, semi final or final is drawn at the end of full-time, after repeating the coin-toss procedure, a period of 4 minutes extra-time shall be played. In the event that the game remains a draw after extra time, then a penalty shoot-out will decide the result (see Rule 8).

NOTE: FA guidelines state that Under 7 and Under 8 players must not play more than 40 minutes of football and Under 9 and Under 10 players should not play more than 60 minutes of football. All managers of teams in these age groups should bear this in mind and use substitutes to ensure that they remain within this FA guideline.

5. League System

- 5.1 Play shall be by the League System (addition of points). Points: 3 for a win, 1 for a draw and 0 for a loss. In the event of a team being awarded a game, 3 points will be recorded or if at the knockout stages will receive a bye. Teams will progress from the league stage to either the quarter finals, semi-finals or finals as follows:
- 5.2 Where there are two leagues, depending on the number of teams in the league, either the top two teams with the most points in each league will progress to the semi-final stage or the winners of each league will progress to the final.
- 5.3 In the event of teams obtaining the same number of points after playing all their league matches, the team to progress to the next stage shall be decided in the following order:
 - a) Greatest number of goals scored for.
 - b) The goal difference (goals scored minus goals conceded).
 - c) The result of the league match between the teams concerned.
 - d) Penalties (see Rule 8).

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6. The Final

- 6.1 The winner of each semi-final will play in the final. If a final is drawn at the end of full-time, after repeating the coin-toss procedure, a period of 4 minutes extra-time shall be played. In the event that the game remains a draw after extra time, then a penalty shoot-out will decide the result (see Rule 8).

7. Match balls and Colours

- 7.1 The first named team in each game will change strip in the event of a colour clash with the opposition. If a team is unable to provide a change of strip they must bring with them a set of well-fitting training bibs to enable a differentiation between the teams.

Liphook United FC will provide all match balls.

8. Penalty Shoot Outs

If a penalty shoot-out is required as stated under Rule 5 or 6, the following procedure shall be followed to determine the winning team:

- 8.1 Only players remaining on the pitch at the end of extra time are allowed to participate.
- 8.2 Each team will nominate three players to take penalties.
- 8.3 If the score remains equal after the first three players have completed their penalties, then teams will alternate kicks until one side misses, the other having scored their corresponding penalty will be the winner. All team members (including the goal-keeper) must take penalties in strict rotation.
- 8.4 In the event of a penalty shoot-out being required to decide progression from the group stage, Rule 8.1 does not apply but the manager will need to nominate **five** players for the shoot-out. Rule 8.3 applies.
- 8.5 In the event of more than two teams being involved with a penalty shoot-out to decide progression from the league stage, the teams will shoot-out in alphabetical order.

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9. Results

- 9.1 In group matches, the 'home' team is responsible for collecting the result slip from the Referee and handing it in at the Control Tent within 10 minutes of the end of the match.

10. Discipline

- 10.1 Any player being sent off will be suspended from the remainder of the tournament and will be reported to their local football association.
- 10.2 Any team or individual reported for referee abuse will be disqualified from the tournament and also reported.
- 10.3 The referee's decision is final, so far as the result of the match is concerned.
- 10.4 Any dispute or other matter not covered by these rules will be settled by the Tournament Committee, whose decision will be final.
- 10.5 Pitches will be partially roped off to protect the playing surface and players, in that event, only officials, trainers and players involved in the match will be allowed inside the ropes. Please instruct your players to observe this rule at all times.

NOTE: The organisers have the right to refuse entry to any team, manager or player whose presence in their opinion may be prejudicial to the smooth running of the Tournament. Similarly, any unfair / inappropriate behaviour may result in a team being disqualified from the tournament. The Tournament Committee is keen to ensure that the **spirit of the game** prevails and that only players registered, with teams entering the competition, play. We are opposed to 'ringers' being used. Our intention is that all teams have an equal chance of winning matches.

11. Queries

- 11.1 Any query concerning the rules must be made before the start of play for the day. There will be a managers' briefing session 30 minutes before the kick-off of each session.