

RULES 2009 – 2010

1. NOMENCLATURE AND CONSTITUTION

This Competition shall be designated the Northamptonshire Combination Football League and known as the MDH Teamwear Northamptonshire Combination Football League.

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 their appropriate County Football Association. The area covered by the Competition Membership shall be no more than 50 miles from the centre of Northampton.

This Competition shall apply annually for sanction to the Northamptonshire Football Association and the constituent teams of Member Clubs may be grouped in divisions.

The number of teams in each division shall be decided by the Management Committee but in no case shall the number exceed 20 in the Premier division and not exceeding 16 teams in all other divisions.

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.

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.

Clubs seeking election that fail to comply with these conditions will not be eligible for election.

Clubs in membership that fail to comply with these rules will be excluded from membership of the Northamptonshire Combination subject to approval of the Annual General Meeting.

The headquarters of the Northamptonshire Combination shall be Northampton.

The constituent teams may be grouped in Divisions as recommended by the Management Committee of the Northamptonshire Combination and placed before the Annual General Meeting.

All matches shall be played under the Rules of the Football Association and within the Laws of the Game as determined by the International Football Association Board.

2. ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION, DEPOSIT

(A) Applications by Clubs for admission to this Competition must be made in writing to the Secretary and must be accompanied by an Entry Fee of £60.00 per first team and additional teams £50.00 which shall 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. The Entry Fee shall apply.

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 £60.00 per Club additional teams £50.00 payable on or before the 1st May in each year.

(C) Each Club shall within 14 days of election pay a Deposit of £100.00 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 Entry Fee, Annual Subscription and Deposit have been paid and the following information submitted

- (i) Completed Form 1A & 1B by 1st May failing to comply they shall be fined £10.00.
- (ii) Telephone contact for the Club secretary including an answering facility.
- (iii) Additional telephone contact for a Club member responsible for Club administration in the absence of the Club secretary.

(E) Clubs must advise annually to the Secretary in writing by 1st May of its County Football Association affiliation number for the forthcoming Season, failing to comply they shall be fined £10.00. Clubs must advise the Secretary in writing, or on the prescribed form 1A & 1B, of details of its Headquarters, Officers and any other information required by the Competition.

(F) Any club desiring membership or any existing club wishing to add a team or teams shall apply in writing to the Hon Secretary by the 1st day of May preceding the season applied for. Applications received after this date may not be accepted, with the exception of Step 6 relegated Clubs.

(G) Applications shall be dealt with by the Vetting Committee. The Vetting Committee shall carry out an inspection of the facilities of each club making an application and will report on their findings and recommendations to the Committee.

3. OFFICERS

The Officers of the Competition shall be the President, Life Members, Life Vice-Presidents Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Assistant Secretary, Treasurer, Registration Secretary, Referees Secretary Fixtures Secretary, Press Officer, Results Officer. Information Technology Officer, League Welfare Officer and 8 Management Committee members to be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. (N.B. Auditors are not Officers).

4. MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION

(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 8 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 1st February 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/as often as is necessary to deal with business as it arises.

(D) On receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds of the Members of the Management Committee the Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Committee.

(E) 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.

(F) All communications received from Clubs must be conducted through their nominated Secretary.

(G) Nominations for Life Members, Life Vice Presidents and Vice Presidents from League Officers having completed 21 years in office to be submitted in writing to the Hon Secretary by the 1st day of February each year for approval by the Committee.

(H) Any Committee member missing three consecutive meetings may be asked to resign his/her position on the Committee.

(I) In pursuance of participation within the Pyramid of Junior Football three members of the Committee shall be appointed League Representatives to the Joint Liaison Committee of the United Counties Football League in accordance with the charter.

(J) The Committee shall have the power to deal with any matter, which is not covered by the Rules of the League, under the Rules of the Football Association and the Laws of the Game.

- (K) A Finance Committee shall be appointed whose business it will be to deal with the finances of the League. The Finance Committee to consist of the League Chairman, the Hon Secretary, the Hon Treasurer and two other members appointed from the Committee.
- (L) In cases of extreme emergency the League Chairman and the Hon Secretary shall have power to act on behalf of the League in all matters.

5. POWERS OF MANAGEMENT

(A) The Management Committee may appoint such other sub-committees as they may consider necessary and may delegate such of their powers as they deem necessary to such committees. The decisions of all such 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 Northamptonshire 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. (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. 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.

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

Decisions of the Management Committee must be notified in writing to those concerned within twenty-one days.

(F) Five Members of the Management Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business of the Management Committee and three 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 no less than £10.00 or otherwise penalised at the discretion of the Management Committee.

(I) All fines imposed by the League, all stationery supplied and all accounts rendered must be settled by the last day of the month, even if the Club proposes to appeal. Fines for successful appeals will be refunded. Clubs failing to comply shall be fined £10.00 and an additional £20.00 for each months outstanding dues.

Debts of £40.00 or more in contravention of the last day of the month payment deadline shall cause fixtures in the current season for the offending club to be suspended until all monies are paid in full. Fixtures that are already made would then be considered as broken fixtures.

Clubs, Officials or individuals committing a breach of this Rule will incur such penalties as the Management Committee may impose.

(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 or Special General Meeting called to decide the constitution and the commencement of the Competition season.

(L) No participant under the age of 18 can be fined.

6. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

(A) The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than 31st May in each year. At this meeting the following business shall be transacted provided that at least two thirds of 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 therefrom.

(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). This is subject to the secretary of the new club attending an administration awareness course organized by the league. The course will take place no later than 21 days after the AGM. Clubs, whose secretary fails to attend the course, will not have their membership accepted. Secretaries from existing clubs with a poor administration record are also required to attend the course.

(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 and conclusion of playing season.

(x) Other business of which due notice shall have been given and accepted as being relevant to an Annual General Meeting.

(B) A copy of the duly audited Balance Sheet, Statement of Accounts and Agenda shall be forwarded to each Club at least fourteen days prior to the meeting, and to the Northamptonshire County Football Association.

(C) A signed copy of the duly audited Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts shall be sent to the Northamptonshire County Football Association within fourteen days of its adoption by the Annual General Meeting.

(D) Each Full Member Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to an Annual General Meeting. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only. Not less than seven days' notice shall be given of any Meeting.

(E) 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.

(F) 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.

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

(H) Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at the Annual General Meeting without satisfactory reason being given shall be fined £35.00. Clubs that don't submit a written explanation/apology for their absence within 3 days of the AGM will be fined an additional £20 per week until such correspondence is received.

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

6.1 Full Member League Meetings.

Full Member League Meetings shall take place in September and February of each season. The day of the week upon which such meetings shall be held will be decided by the committee.

Any club not represented at a Full Member League Meeting shall be fined £30.00 for the first offence and £50.00 for a second offence. Clubs that don't submit a written explanation/apology for their absence within 3 days of the Full Members League meeting will be fined an additional £20 per week until such correspondence is received.

Clubs that have not attended any meetings during a season will be fined an additional £100 and will also be required to provide a satisfactory written explanation to the Hon General Secretary before their application for membership for the following season can be processed.

A roll call of clubs in attendance shall be taken at the close of the meeting preceding the item Any Other Business. Any club which has left the meeting without the courtesy of informing the Chair shall be considered to have not attended the meeting and will be fined as per rule.

No minutes will be issued for Full Member League Meetings. An agenda will be available before Full Members meeting.

Officers, Management Committee members, club secretaries and referees may submit explanations in writing for consideration by the Committee where an infringement of the rules has occurred.

All such correspondence must be received by the Hon General Secretary 48 hours before the date of the next due management committee meeting otherwise it will not be considered at that next due meeting.

7. AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED

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 Northamptonshire Combination 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 Northamptonshire County Football Association 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).

8. QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

(A) Contract players, as defined in Football Association Rules, are not permitted in this Competition.

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

(1) Signed a fully and correctly completed Competition registration form in ink, counter-signed by an Officer of the Club, and who has been registered with the (Registrations) Secretary by 9pm on the day prior to playing and whose completed registration counterfoil has been acknowledged by the Registration secretary prior to playing.

Registration forms may also be submitted to the (Registrations) Secretary by facsimile machine prior to the player playing by 9pm on the day prior to playing, original to be sent to Registration secretary within 48 hours. Please send self addressed envelope for registrations so as they can be sent back to your club.

If the player's registration is later found to be unacceptable the club will be held responsible and be dealt with by the Committee who shall the power to cancel a player's registration at any time, if this is found to be necessary. This includes a player who has signed a registration form during the close season and is later found to be under suspension. Clubs may check the status of each player with County FA's or their websites. The League reserves the right to ask any club to provide proof of identification for a registered player for registration purposes.

No registration will be accepted after the 1st day of March each season unless specially sanctioned by the committee.

(2) Each club to register at least twelve players per team. These are to be lodged with the Hon Registration Secretary not less than fourteen days before the League's opening fixture or the club will be fined £10.00. A club registering no players before the season start date will have its membership of the League terminated.

(C) The Hon Registration Secretary will supply registration books, result sheet books and transfer forms at appropriate charges.

(D) A 50p fee shall be paid for each player registered in excess of seventy players in the case of a club with three teams, fifty players in the case of a club with two teams and thirty players in the case of a club with one team in the League.

(E) Registration forms shall be obtained from the Registrations Secretary or League Secretary at the appropriate fee.

(F) 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.

(G)

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 willfully neglected to accurately or fully complete.

(iv) A Player whilst under suspension shall not be allowed to join, be transferred or sign for a Club during his suspension period.

(H)

(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.

(I) Subject to The Football Association Rules dealing with players without a written contract a player must sign for only one Club in one season, but transfers will be granted from 1st September until 1st March. A transfer form is obtainable from the Hon Registration Secretary at appropriate charge. Seven days notice in writing must be given to the Club holding the player's signature and the player must not play for his new Club until this Club has received an official acceptance from the Hon Registration Secretary. The transfer form must be lodged with the Hon Registration Secretary by 9pm prior to the day of the match.

A club shall not refuse to transfer a player unless proof in writing is submitted that the player is not clear of any obligation he may have with his club. In the event of an objection to a transfer the matter shall be referred to the Management Committee for a decision. A player can only be transferred on two occasions and there must be a minimum of 28 days between each transfers.

The status of a transferred player shall include appearances for his previous club. If that previous club has only one team then all the appearances for that club will be counted as first team appearances. A club contravening this rule will be fined £10.00 and any points gained will be deducted.

(J) A club with a first or senior team in another league shall conform to this rule and shall provide any documentary evidence called for from the club or other leagues. (K) 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.

(L) A register containing the names of all players registered for each Club, with the date of registration, shall be kept by the Hon 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.

(M) Teams in any division shall not be allowed to play more than three higher level team players in their lower teams in any one match. A first team player is one who has played fifty per cent or more of his club's first team League and Cup matches from the commencement of the season. This rule is to operate from the 1st day of November of each season. Failure to do so will result in the defaulting club being fined £10.00.

(N) Clubs playing an unregistered or ineligible player shall be fined not less than £20.00 and deducted 3 points regardless of whether the match resulted in a win, loss or draw for the offending team.

Where the offending team has lost the result of the match will stand.

Where the offending team has won the result will be declared null and void and the match replayed at the cost of the offending club. In the case of a draw the result will be declared null and void and the match replayed at the cost of the offending club.

(O) (i) Officials representing the League may conduct player registration checks at matches. All players and substitutes are required to provide information as required by the League official in their own hand at the time that this is required to be done. Refusal by a club to comply will result in a fine of not less than £50.00 and not less than 3 points deducted.

(ii) The Management Committee may, at its discretion, award the points available in the match in question to the opponents, subject to the match not being ordered to be replayed.

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

9. CLUB COLOURS. CLUB NAME

(A) Every Club must register the colour of its shirts, shorts and socks with the Secretary by 1st May who shall decide as to their suitability. Any further changes must be notified to the Hon Secretary immediately.

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 5 days before the match.

If, in the opinion of the referee, two Clubs have the same or similar colours, the away 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 £10.00.

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. It is requested that all teams shall have numbered shirts from one to fourteen with players commencing the match with numbers one to eleven.

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

(It is recommended that predominantly black/navy shirts, should not be purchased.)

10. PLAYING SEASON. CONDITIONS OF PLAY, TIMES OF KICK-OFF. POSTPONEMENTS. SUBSTITUTES.

(A) The Annual General Meeting shall determine the commencing and concluding dates for the ensuing season which shall be in accordance with Football Association Rules. No Club shall be compelled to play after the concluding date. Original fixtures arranged by the Fixtures Secretary, or at a meeting specially convened for that purpose, to be held no later than 31st May must not be arranged for a date later than seven days preceding the concluding date determined by the Annual General Meeting. Any re-arranged fixtures made by the fixture secretary the Club will be notified with five days notice.

(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. Any Club changing their Ground location MUST advise the League.

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 Committee suggests that the referee should tell both teams before the kick off if a period of less than forty five minutes each way is to be played.

The times of kick-off shall be fixed by the A.G.M. or the Management Committee. Any Club failing to commence at the appointed time shall be fined a sum not exceeding £10.00 or be otherwise dealt with as the Management Committee may determine.

The kick off times for matches shall be 2.30 pm with the exception of those during November, December and January when they shall be 2.00 pm or earlier times as mutually agreed by the Committee or member clubs concerned. Mid-week matches shall have a kick off time no later than 6:30 pm.

Clubs with floodlights may kick off at 3.00 pm on Saturdays and 7.30 pm midweek, subject to opponents agreement. The half time interval shall not exceed fifteen minutes.

Referees must order matches to commence at the appointed time and must report all late starts to the Competition. Clubs causing a late start will be fined £10.00.

Competing clubs must provide a club assistant referee for the duration of the match and the home club must provide two match balls (the standard League footballs are recommended), four corner flags and two Asst Referee flags or be liable to a fine of £10.00 in each instance. Goal nets must be used.

Clubs in Division One, Two, Three, Four and Reserves Premier, One and Two of the League to provide dressing rooms, hot washing facilities and drinks at the ground for the Referee and visiting team. Clubs failing to provide these facilities will be fined £20.00 in each case.

(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. Clubs may mutually agree to bring forward a match with the consent of the Fixtures Secretary.

(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, no later than the Tuesday prior to a Saturday match, or 4 clear days for a mid week match.

Any Club failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to a fine of £10.00.

(E) Every Club shall play its best available qualified team or teams in all matches in the Competition.

In the event of a Club playing in any match with less than eleven players they may be fined £10.00. A minimum of seven 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 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 with more than one team in the Competition shall always fulfil its fixture, within the Competition, in the following order of precedence:- First Team, Reserve Team, A Team. Clubs in breach of this requirement shall be fined a sum not exceeding £30 or otherwise dealt with by the Management Committee.

Any club breaking a League fixture shall be fined £30.00 for a 1st offence, £50.00 for a 2nd offence and £75.00 for a 3rd offence plus any reasonable expenses incurred by the opposing club on production of the necessary receipts and subject to the ground being available.

Three points shall be deducted but the match may be awarded subject to the match not being ordered to be replayed.

Any Club unable to fulfil a fixture must, without delay, give notice to the League 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 may inflict any penalty it may deem suitable. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in a fine of £10.00.

The league reserves the right to inspect the pitch of a club that has postponed their game. Matches abandoned by the referee for any cause must be reported by the referee and home club to the Hon Secretary by telephone before 4.30pm for Saturday fixtures or 8.30pm for evening fixtures. Failure to comply with this procedure will result in a fine of £10.00.

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 mutually agreed by the two Clubs and approved by the Management Committee. Failing such agreement and

notification to the League Secretary within days the Management Committee shall have power to order the match to be played on a named date or on or before a given date. Providing gate money is taken and retained the visiting Club shall receive their actual standard class rail or bus fares or the equivalent for 16 persons, or car allowance at 30p per mile for transporting 16 persons, or hire charge of a coach (receipt to be submitted)., The residue (if any) to be equally divided between the two Clubs after deducting the cost of advertising, printing, posting, police and match officials charges. The home Club shall take the whole of the proceeds of the second match.

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) Only three substitutions by each side will be permitted in any match. A Club may, at its discretion, use three substitute players nominated from five at any time during the match except to replace a player who has been dismissed from the field of play by the referee for misconduct after the match has commenced. A substitution can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the referee has given permission.

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

(I) All officially sanctioned games played during the season outside of League games to be notified to the League

11. REPORTING RESULTS

(A) In all matches both competing clubs shall submit to the Hon Registration Secretary a fully and correctly completed result sheet with the surname and full first names of all players taking part, Clubs not correctly completing result sheet, will incur a £10.00 fine, which is to be in the hands of the Hon Registration Secretary within four days of a match being played.

A club responsible for result sheets arriving late in a single delivery will result in the club being fined the sum of £10.00 with the exception of correspondence bearing a first class stamp and a postmark for the day immediately previous to deadline day. After seven days, an additional fine of £10.00 per team will be imposed for each subsequent week a result sheet is late.

Proven falsification of result sheets shall result in the club being fined £30.00 and 3 points deducted.

(B) Results of all matches to be sent by text to the results line number on the day of the match by the home team before 5.15pm and for evening games before 9.00 pm. Clubs competing in County Cup games with teams from outside leagues to text results, whether the team is home or away.

Clubs failing to text results or text result after the deadline times will be fined £10.00 in each instance.

12. DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP

(A) Team rankings within the Competition will be decided by points with three points to be awarded for a win and one 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 may be decided in any one or more of the following ways:-

- (i) goal difference
- (ii) goals scored
- (iii) deciding match(es) played under conditions determined by the Management Committee.

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

(C) The Committee shall decide on all matters relating to formation, promotion or relegation within all divisions except where the jurisdiction of the Joint Liaison Committee (Pyramid of Junior Football) is operative. All clubs forming the Premier division or promoted to same to provide ground and dressing room facilities of a standard to the satisfaction of the Committee.

(D) Any club requiring a grading inspection in order to progress their application to join a more Senior league will be charged £10.00.

13. REFEREES

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

Referees must acknowledge appointments by 1st class return of post or email as failure to do so will result in another officer being appointed.

(B) Appointed referees shall arrive thirty minutes prior to kick off time.

Club Assistant Referees must report to the referee ten minutes prior to the kick off time failure will result in Club being fined £10.00.

A separate dressing room for referees to be provided if possible. Hot washing facilities must be provided.

None of the named substitutes shall act as club assistant referee in any Premier or Division One match. Fine £10.00

(C) In the event of the non-appearance of the appointed referee, (and there are no officially appointed Assistant Referees present) the Clubs shall agree upon a replacement Referee. A Referee thus agreed upon shall, for that game, have the full powers, status and authority of a registered Referee. The League is not necessarily responsible for any expenses relating to non arrival of referee.

Non allocation of Referee – game should not be cancelled before 11am on the Saturday as a Referee could be allocated.

(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 arbiter and whose decision must be accepted unless the ground is declared fit for play. A League Management Committee member or League Officer may not call off a fixture on their own pitch.

(E) The fee shall be Premier £30.00 and subsequent divisions £28.00. Fees include £16.00 traveling expenses. Where assistant referees are appointed by the League the fee shall be £20.00. Referee and assistant referees to be paid at the conclusion of the match by the host club or the club will be liable to a fine of £10.00. Clubs are reminded that it is not the referees responsibility to request his/her match fee, therefore the onus is on the home club to ensure prompt payment.

(F) A fee of £20.00 shall be paid to a referee or assistant referee who is present for a match which for any reason is not played.

(G) Referees failing to officiate at an accepted match shall not be appointed to Northamptonshire Combination matches for two months unless a satisfactory explanation is received by the Hon Referees Secretary within three days of the match being played, and may be reported to the Association with which he 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.

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.

(I) For League and cup matches the home club must provide the match referee with a first class stamped prepaid match card.

For ALL County Cup matches Northamptonshire Combination teams at home must provide a first class stamped prepaid match card. In ALL County Cup matches Northamptonshire Combination teams playing AWAY to teams from other leagues will provide a match card. Proven failure by the club to provide the referee with a first class stamped match card will result in the club being fined £10.00.

The match referee is asked to complete and post the prepaid card with the relevant details. Notification of rule infringements by use of the match card will provide the basis for penalties to be applied by the Management Committee.

Proven failure by the home club to provide the referee with a first class stamped match card will result in the club being fined £10.00. Referees are strongly advised to ensure the match card is available.

(J) Where and when considered necessary neutral assistant referees shall be appointed, subject to commitments, by the Committee.

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

(L) Match information forms as supplied by the League to clubs to be completed by both teams (except Premier Division & Division One) and handed to the match referee ten minutes prior to the kick off.

Clubs in Premier & Division One must complete a full team sheet as supplied by the League and handed to the match referee fifteen minutes prior to the kick off.

Referees to report non compliance with this rule. Failure of Club and opposition to comply fine £10.00.

14. CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP OR WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB

(A) After 31st 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 fulfillment of all other obligations to the Competition must notify the Secretary in writing by 1st February each Season or be liable to a fine not exceeding £100.00.

(B) A Club shall not be allowed to withdraw any or all of its teams from the Competition after the Annual General Meeting for the following Season. Any Club infringing this Rule shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £100.00 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 for that purpose not earlier than 1st May nor later than 31st May or at the Annual General Meeting held not later than 31st May the Competition shall have the right, irrespective of other provisions in this Rule, to refuse to permit a Club to withdraw its team(s) 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.

15. PROTESTS AND COMPLAINTS

(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 three 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 £20.00. 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 be afforded an opportunity to make a statement when the protest or complaint is being heard and must have received seven days notice of the hearing, together with a copy of the submission. When dealing with a protest or complaint the Management Committee shall take into consideration the possession by the protesting or complaining Club of any information which, if properly used, might have avoided the protest or complaint.

16. BOARD OF APPEAL

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 Northamptonshire Football Association, including a fee of £20.00 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.

17. EXCLUSION OF CLUBS OR TEAMS MISCONDUCT, CLUBS, OFFICIALS, PLAYERS

(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 club where the actions of its players and / or management are deemed by the Committee to have brought the League into disrepute will be fined not less than £50.00 plus £20.00 costs.

(E) Players whose actions are deemed by the management committee to have brought the league into disrepute will be fined no less than £50 plus £20 costs. They may also have their registration suspended until the fine is paid and as a last resort their registration cancelled.

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

(A) If a Competition be 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.

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."

The Chairman, Secretary or one member of the Committee of a club winning a League trophy shall sign on behalf of the club a memorandum of agreement as to the safe custody of the trophy.

(B) The League is to insure all trophies.

(C) Trophies to be returned to the Hon Treasurer by the second Wednesday in February of each year in a condition which is satisfactory to the Committee. Failure to do so will result in a £10.00 fine.

(D) Clubs returning incomplete trophies or trophies which have been damaged whilst in their care will be liable to a minimum fine of £50.00 plus the cost of replacement parts and or repairs.

(E) Failure to return a trophy to the League will result in the club being charged for its replacement.

(F) Any damage or loss of trophy must be reported to the Hon Treasurer within seven days.

(G) Sixteen winners and runners up mementoes shall presented, League funds permitting.

19. SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

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 Full Member Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to all Special General Meetings. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only.

Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at a Special General Meeting without satisfactory reason being given shall be fined £25.00.

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

20. ALTERATION TO RULES

Alterations 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 1st March in each year. The proposals, together with any proposals by the Management Committee, shall be circulated to the Clubs by the Secretary and any amendments thereto shall be submitted to the Secretary. 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 two thirds [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 seven days prior to the date of the meeting.

Any alterations or additions decided upon at any meeting shall not become operative until the approval of the Association issuing sanction shall have been obtained.

21. RULES BINDING ON CLUBS

Each Member Club shall be deemed to have given its assent to the foregoing Rules and agreed to abide by the decisions of the Management Committee subject to Rule 16. Each Member Club must abide by any issued Football Association Code of Conduct (see Appendix B)

22. FINANCE

(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 31st March.

(D) The books, or a certified balance sheet, of a Competition shall be prepared and shall be audited/verified annually by some suitable person(s) who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

(E) All mileage for League Officers, Management Committee Members and Clubs, with such mileage allowance payments for clubs only at the discretion of the Committee, shall be calculated at 30p per mile.

23. MATTERS NOT COVERED BY RULES

For the purposes of expediency or policy regarding any matter not covered by rule or the Pyramid of Junior Football the Committee shall have the power to decide the course of action until such time as the matter is clarified by rule.

Failure to respond to League correspondence within 14 days will result in a fine of £20.

In exceptional circumstances the league reserves the right to request a response in less than 14 days. In these circumstances the deadline for responding will be clearly stated.

24. STANDARD REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRY TO PREMIER DIVISION.

Clubs in a position for promotion to the Premier division will be inspected for compliance with this Rule in the season prior to promotion. All amendments to Rule 24 to voted on only by Premier and Division One Clubs.

- (a). Minimum size of playing area 100 yards x 65 yards, 91 metres x 59.5 metres.
- (b). Goal posts and nets to be of professional manufacture and to meet the requirements of the Laws of the Game.
- (c). Shortest distance between touch line and perimeter barrier 1.85 metres.
- (d). Shortest distance between the goal line and pitch perimeter barrier 2.75 metres.
- (e). Pitch cordoned off on all sides by rail or rope. If rope is used this must remain taught and be in place for the full duration of the game.
- (f). Playing surface grass must be of good standard. Synthetic/artificial grass only accepted with the approval of the Management Committee.
- (g). Pitch to be free from surface depressions and excessive undulations.
- (h). Trainers boxes, if available, to be clearly marked Home and Away. Each box to be able to accommodate at least six persons, to be a minimum of 1.85 metres from the touch line, to be a minimum three metres apart, to be securely fixed and ideally adjacent to the half way line.
- (i). Technical areas must be suitably marked.
- (j). Toilets, Ladies and Gents, to be situated within the ground.
- (k). Separate dressing rooms for each team and officials. These must be situated close enough to the pitch in order to allow sufficient time for them to be used at half time.
- (l). Separate hot shower facilities for players with at least three shower heads per team. Separate shower facilities for match official.
- (m). Sole use of designated dressing rooms and shower facilities, pitch and surrounding area in order to avoid encroachment from other matches.
- (n). Drinks must be provided to visiting team at half time, also to match officials on arrival, half time and full time.
- (o). Flags must be provided for Assistant Referees by the home club.
- (p). None of the named substitutes to act as Assistant Referees.
- (q). In order to maintain League standards referees must before each match inspect facilities and report any contravention of League rules to the Hon Secretary. They are not expected to enter the players' dressing rooms unless invited.
- (r). Officers, Management Committee members and Club secretaries must also report any infringement of rules.
- (s). Provide clean and hygienic toilet facilities to include hot hand washing with soap and towels.
- (t). Must have the ability to mark the whole of their own playing area with white lines before each match.
- (u). Undertake the re seeding of all worn areas during the closed season.
- (v). Keep dressing rooms in a clean and hygienic condition by cleaning them prior to each match.
- (w). Clubs failing to comply with Premier division standards will be fined £10.00 in each case.

25. KNOCK OUT COMPETITIONS.

- (a). All teams will be included in Competitions. The Management committee will fix dates for all rounds.
- (b). Qualification of players: as for League games. However Only two players who have played in their first team Cup competition to be allowed to play in reserve team Competition provided that at least one of these has played fifty per cent or more of his games for his reserve team.
- (c). Qualification for Cup Finals will be a player who shall have played in a previous round or a minimum of ten games for the team participating in the Final within this League.
- (d). No player shall play in any league Competition for more than one club in the same season. A Club contravening this rule will be fined £10.00 and struck out of the Competition.
- (e). All teams competing in a Final Tie of the Competition must check with the Hon Registration Secretary not less than fourteen days preceding the match date the eligibility of the players they wish to include in the team for this game. Any club contravening this rule will be fined £10.00.
- (f). Clubs playing a reserve team in any round of the Competition are strongly advised to check the eligibility of the players they may require for their particular game.
- (g). Ninety minutes will be played and extra time in all matches if necessary. If the scores are still level at the end of extra time the tie will be decided by the taking of penalty kicks in accordance with the provisions for the taking of penalty kicks as set out by the Football Association.
- (h). Referees fees to be as in League matches. Where assistant referees are appointed the two competing clubs will share the costs.
- (i). Final : - the League to be responsible for match expenses.
- (j). The Committee shall make the draw for each round and arrange for the venues for the Finals.
- (k). Kick off times for Cup Competitions to be 2 pm with the exception of those during November, December and January where they shall be 1.30 pm.
- (l). All other League rules to apply.
- (m). Dressing rooms to be opened at least thirty minutes prior to kick off time.
- (n). Broken fixtures. Any fixture which is not played due to weather conditions or circumstances over which neither side has control shall be re arranged by the Fixtures Secretary. If a fixture is not played for any other reason then the defaulting club will be dealt with as the Management Committee deem fit and may be struck out of the competition.
- (o). Upon the second postponement of a cup fixture, the Committee may give notice that the venue for that match may be reversed. Notice of a fixture reversal will be given by 8pm on the preceding Thursday to both Clubs.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY:

Child Protection, Equal Opportunity and Anti Discrimination Policy. The League pledges its support and abides by the Football Association's Child Protection Policy and Procedures, its Code of Conduct and Equal Opportunities and Anti Discrimination policy.

N.B.

Notify the Hon. League Secretary when Club Secretary is away for any reason. Please ensure that the Hon. League Secretary is informed of changes in Club administration personnel Secretary, Chairman, Treasurer.
Registrations & Transfers Forms must be signed by Club Secretary