

The Northumberland Mini Soccer League

League Rules

1. Club Obligations

- a. All teams must be affiliated to Northumberland Football Association.
- b. Clubs will be responsible to ensure that their players, team managers and spectators adhere to the League Codes of Conduct and all the requirements of the FA RESPECT campaign.
- c. All team managers must hold, or be in the process of obtaining, an enhanced disclosure certificate from the FA and hold a current safe guarding children certificate.
- d. Every club is expected to send one representative to the monthly League meetings.
- e. Clubs must fulfil fixture obligations on the date assigned. Any team not able to fulfil a fixture will automatically forfeit the game to the other teams.

2. Player Eligibility

The ethos of the Nmsl is fair play and child protection however clubs are required to adhere to the following agreements;

- a. The under 8 division will be open to boys and girls who have attained their sixth birthday but who have not attained their eighth birthday before midnight on the 31st August of the year in which the season begins.
- b. The under 9 division will be open to boys and girls who have attained their eighth birthday but who have not attained their ninth birthday before midnight on the 31st August of the year in which the season begins.
- c. The under 10 division will be open to boys and girls who have attained their ninth birthday but who have not attained their tenth birthday before midnight on the 31st August of the year in which the season begins.
- d. FA regulations forbid a junior player to play in an age division other than the one for which they are eligible. Liability insurance may be invalid if a player plays in a match where any other player is older or younger by more than 2 years.
- e. All teams will be required to register their players prior to the start of the season and provide details of player's names and dates of birth. You will also be required to provide evidence of dates of birth. New players must be registered a minimum of 2 days in advance of that players first game. New signings after Commencement of the championship leagues will only be permitted at the discretion of the League committee.
- f. All teams must complete a team sheet, following each game, listing all players used and post to the league secretary by the following Thursday, failure to provide a team sheet correctly filled in will result in a £5.00 fine. Teams who field unregistered players will be sanctioned by the committee, including the loss of points.
- g. Clubs who enter two or more teams in the league are not permitted to mix squads.
- h. If a player transfers to a different team during the season, the League secretary must receive notice in writing from the club secretary of the team he/she is leaving indicating that permission has been granted. If the club have objections to the move, the player is not free to play for a new team until the matter has been dealt with by the League committee. Players are permitted one transfer per season which must be done prior to the start of the championship leagues. No transfers will be permitted till the first of October of any playing season.

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3. Results

- a. The home team manager is required to report their result by text, phone or email by 7.15pm on the day of the match to the correct age group fixture secretary
- b. A fine of £5.00 will be payable for failing to report a result
- c. League points will be awarded on the basis of 3 points for a win, 1 point for a draw.
- d. Final League positions will be determined by: 1. Total points 2.Goal difference. In the event of a tie for league winners a play-off will be arranged at the end of the season

4. Competition Rules - Supervision of Games

- a. No game will be allowed to kick-off unless a responsible adult over the age of 18 is present to manage and take responsibility for the conduct of each team.
- b. Team managers must check the playing area for hazards and confirm the security of goals prior to kick-off.
- c. Each team is expected to supply a qualified referee to referee the game .If a referee is not available a coin must be spun to decide which manager shall act as the official A team manager who is acting as referee must refrain from coaching their team while carrying out their duties. Referees should be familiar with "The Laws of The Game", the specific rules applicable to mini-soccer as well as local competition rules outlined below.
- d. In accordance with the RESPECT campaign all spectators will be on the same side of a pitch and will remain behind the markers. The manager, assistant and substitutes only will stay on the opposite side of the pitch.
- e. Each team will have a maximum of two managers coaching the players during any game.
- f. Each team will field 7 players and a maximum of 10 players may be used during the game, No game should take place were one team has less than 5 players
- g. In all age divisions substitutes can interchange any number of times but must enter the field from the half-way line, during a break in play with the referee's permission.
- h. Under 8's will play 4 quarters of 10 Minutes each, Under 9,s will play 4 equal quarters of 12.5 minutes, Under 10's will play two halves of 25 Minutes.
- i. Under 8 matches should be played with a size 3 ball, 9 and 10 age groups will use a size 4 football
- j. Shin guards must be worn by all players, playing kit must not display the Childs name.
- k. Goal keepers can handle a back-pass in the under 8 division only. A free kick from the edge of the goal area will be awarded if a keeper in the under 9 or 10 divisions handles a back-pass
- l. At kick-off, goal kicks, corner kicks and free kicks defending players must retreat at least 5 yards. Free kicks are direct.
- m. No offside rule in mini soccer
- n. Play must be stopped if a child is on the ground injured or in distress
- o. Corners and throw-ins are taken as normal.

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Competition Rules...Continued

- p. Goal sizes should be 6ft x 6ft, however at under 10's the larger size of 12ft x 6ft may be used.
- q. Pitch sizes should follow FA Guidelines ; Minimum 30yds x 40yds Maximum 50yds x 60yds

5. Discipline

As it is impractical to provide independent referees and due to the impact of sending off a player in mini soccer, red and yellow cards are not being used by referees in the League. It is essential however those players understand the importance of fair play

- a. In the event of serious misconduct such as persistent dissent, foul and abusive language or violent conduct the referee should ask the player's team manager to withdraw the player from the game.
- b. The offender may play no further part in that game but a substitute may be sent on if available.
- c. Team managers are expected to give their cooperation to referees in such instances to deal with their own players as outlined above when they are acting as a referee
- d. In the event of a player being sent off the referee should file a report with the league secretary within 5 days of the incident. The player may be dealt with by the League disciplinary committee or referred to the players local youth division.

6. Complaints

In order to maintain good standards and provide a positive environment for young footballers it is important that clubs are able to raise concerns with the League committee, and that these are dealt with effectively.

There are two main ways for clubs to make a complaint;

- a. For matters involving less serious breaches of codes of conduct or League rules any team manager can file a report with brief details of the problem. A committee member will be assigned to observe the subject of the complaint at the next fixture and look out for similar issues in the future. This will give the committee an early warning of potential problems
- b. More serious official complaints against members of other clubs or league officials may only be made in writing through club secretaries to the league secretary and must arrive within 5 days of the incident.
- c. Clubs may be fined £10- if complaints are received which are not signed by their club secretary
- d. The committee will deal with the matter within 14 days of it being received by the league secretary and communicate their decision to the secretary of the club/s concerned.
- e. Clubs will then have a further 14 days to lodge any appeal in writing to the league secretary in which case an appeal committee will review the matter.