

CHERRY RED RECORDS **COMBINED COUNTIES** **FOOTBALL LEAGUE**



ADMINISTRATION **GUIDE**

Affiliated to The Football Association
Members of the National League System

Season 2023-2024

Issue 14

INTRODUCTION

This booklet is designed to provide assistance to the Club Secretary. Some are experienced in this role and may only use this as an aide memoir. Others who are new to the role should refer to this guide more often. This booklet is for guidance only and you must check the rule books issued by The Football Association; The County Association and the Combined Counties League.

The Club Secretary is, without any doubt, the most important person in the Club. The Secretary is the official contact between the Club and the League competition and County Football Association and, in some situations, The Football Association. You must understand that The County Football Association will only correspond with the Club Secretary and not other club officials.

The Combined Counties League are a little more flexible and allow the use of a Match Secretary, who may take on part of the Club Secretary's role, in confirming fixtures with the opposition and match officials and corresponding with the league fixtures secretary. They may also be responsible for reporting the result via SMS.

The Club Secretary duties will also include:

Affiliation - Each football club is required to renew its affiliation to its County Football Association each year. Your County Football Association requires you to affiliate online using the Whole Game System which must be done and the appropriate fee paid by the specified date. The league requires you to have done this before we are able to affiliate the League. As a member of the National League System, the League must ensure that its members have affiliated. If you fail to do so, you may find yourself without any football. When you affiliate you must specify that you are members of the Combined Counties League. If not this will hold up the affiliation process.

Membership of the League - Clubs will be sent membership/club particulars forms by the league. These are normally issued in mid-May in each season and must be fully completed and returned to the League Secretary in accordance with Rule 3.2. This rule specifies how long before the AGM the form must be submitted.

Application of the League Rules - You need to read the league handbook and understand the league rules. We do not expect you to be an expert in all matters but the handbook has everything that you need to know to make sure that you comply with the requirements of the league. The sanction that the league takes when the rules are not complied with is the fine. The league does not want to take money from your club but it is the only proven method of ensuring that the rules are obeyed. Many clubs go through the season without incurring a single fine.

Correspondence - All correspondence must be dealt with without delay. This is most important for any disciplinary matters. The league and the county will take a dim view of club secretaries who do not deal with correspondence in a timely manner. If you are going to be absent for a period of time, make sure someone deputises and is able to receive correspondence on your behalf. Work on the premise of returning all documents as early as possible, do not wait until the due date, there are no fines for returning paperwork early. It also assists all parties concerned.

Club Records - The maintenance of comprehensive club records is essential. The following information needs to be accurately maintained:

- i) Minutes from meetings - these provide an official record of the Club's affairs
- ii) Financial records - must be kept to record income and expenditure and any assets (e.g. vehicles) or liabilities (e.g. any loans). The Club Treasurer shall provide this information. All normal H M Revenue & Customs requirements will need to be met; in so much as they apply.
- iii) Players' register - an up to date record of name, address and date of birth for all past and current club players and officials must be maintained. You should keep your own records and not just rely upon the league record on Full Time. Registration forms must be obtained from the league website, correctly completed and forwarded to the League Registrations Secretary within the required time limit as set out in the competition rules. The details must also be entered onto the FA's Club Portal Player Registration System. Further guidance on this process is available later in this guide.
- iv) Contract players - a player who has signed a standard FA contract, which must have been lodged with The Football Association to make it valid. Players who have signed for clubs under this contract can not play for another club whilst this contract remains in force unless they have done so under a temporary transfer and the appropriate paperwork has been completed. Also note the requirements of HMRC.

Notification of Change - Notify all leagues and competitions in which your club competes of any change of Club officers or their contact details. The County Football Association should also be kept informed in writing of any change of Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer.

Who is there to help you? The league is run by a team of volunteers who give up their time to ensure that the competition runs smoothly. Most of these officers have been a club secretary at some time; several have done so for many years. If in any doubt, ask for help. No one expects you to know everything about the job and everyone will help if they can. You can also ask the secretary of another club. Generally you will find them only too willing to point you in the right direction.

ADVICE FOR CLUB SECRETARIES

PREPARATION FOR THE MATCH

There are a number of activities that take place before a match. You are responsible for these but some may be delegated to other club officers.

Match Confirmation

Please ensure that you confirm your matches with your visitors and your match officials in good time. Refer to League Rule 8.13. Remember that Clubs change personnel so not everybody will be aware of your venue.

Maximum notice should be given to your opponents. In the event that there is a clash of colours the away team will normally change. This includes goalkeeper's jerseys so that they do not wear the same colours as outfield players. This should be confirmed in writing to avoid error and confusion.

Make sure that no part of the kit clashes. Where the shirts & shorts are different but the socks are the same colour the away side should take a change of socks.

Where a club is able to, this role may be delegated to a Match Secretary.

You may also request of your opponents about how many Club Officials will be requiring hospitality to allow for sufficient catering. Some clubs only have one or two officials that travel with their team; there are some clubs that may have considerably more officials.

In your confirmation to the match official, state how you intend to pay their fee, either by cash after the match or by electronic transfer. The match official may make a request upon the method of payment.

Send your confirmation by email requesting a read receipt (an option in your email application).

Ask match officials to confirm receipt of the match details no later than 48 hours before the match (ie 3pm Thursday for a Saturday game). If you have not heard back from a match official by this time then let the Referees or Assistants Referees Secretary know. Do not leave this until the day before a match because this makes it more difficult to source replacements if necessary.

Example Email To Match Officials

"Referee Name" [Referee]

"Assistant Referee 1 Name" [Assistant Referee]

"Assistant Referee 2 Name" [Assistant Referee]

This is to confirm that you have been appointed Match Officials for the following match:

Home Team FC v Away Team FC

Competition: Combined Counties League Premier Division

Date: Saturday "*Date of Match*" Kick-off: 3pm

At: "*The Address of Your Ground*"

[Local area map and directions attached]

"*Home Team*" FC colours are "*Colour of shirts*" Shirts, "*Colour of shorts*" Shorts and "*Colour of socks*" Socks. Goalkeeper – "*Colour of keepers jersey*"

Hot or cold drinks will be supplied before the game and at half time. Light refreshments will be provided after the game.

Your match officials fee will be paid in cash in the match officials dressing room after the match. (or will be paid electronically; please provide details for a bank transfer.)

I look forward to welcoming you to the "*Name of your ground*".

Example Email To Visitors

Dear "*Name of opposition Secretary*"

Re: Home Team FC v Away Team FC

On: Saturday "*Date of Match*" Kick-off: 3pm

At: "*The address of your ground*"

[Local area map and directions enclosed]

I have pleasure in confirming the above Combined Counties Premier Division League fixture. "*Home Team*" FC colours are "*Colour of shirts*" Shirts, "*Colour of shorts*" Shorts and "*Colour of socks*" Socks. Goalkeeper – "*Colour of keepers jersey*"

Admission Prices: Adults £"*your gate fee*"; Concessions £"*your gate fee*":
Proof of age may be asked for

Please send details of your club history, player pen pictures, team photo and probable line up to myself. Email address is "*youremailaddress*" as soon as possible.

(If you produce an electronic programme) We now produce our matchday programme electronically and publish it online here (where possible include link to area where the programme is published – if this is not possible - tell the recipients where they can find the programme)

Catering will be provided for team officials and players after the game in our clubhouse.

Light refreshments will be provided for visiting Directors/Committee Members, in the boardroom [or appropriate area]; half hour prior to kick-off; at half time and after the game.

I look forward to welcoming you to "*The name of your ground*"

Items in italics & in quotes are for you to supply relevant details.

Cup Competitions

Ensure that you are aware of the format of the competition [e.g. whether there is a replay, extra time, and penalty shootout etc]. Some FA competitions leave it to the clubs to decide whether to play extra-time or not in the first match, check the rules beforehand.

Check the eligibility of your players for the competition. Have they been registered the prerequisite time before the match? Is this a postponed or replayed match, if so are only players eligible for the original match allowed to play?

Ensure that none of your players have played for another club in the same competition in the current season. Most competitions prohibit players from doing this. If this is a semi-final or final match, ensure that your players meet the eligibility requirements for this stage of the competition. Have they played enough games during this season to be eligible?

Make sure that you have the appropriate results forms/team sheets required for the competition.

Travelling to Away Matches

Ensure you send your club history and possible line up to your opponents. Do not just work on the minimum, send pen pictures for players and any other information that is usually used in a match programme. Your opponents may be unable to use the information but if you make it available it may be used. You are able to provide your information to the League who will post in the "Downloads" section of the league website under "Club Information". This is then available to all of your opponents when needed.

You should also advise your hosts of the number of Club Officials attending to assist with them providing sufficient catering.

When travelling to away fixtures ensure that sufficient time is allowed for the journey allowing for any road works or other causes of delay to ensure that the appointed kick off is adhered to. You will be fined if you are responsible for a late start.

Make sure that everyone knows where they are going. Obtain and distribute directions to the opponents' ground or make sure SATNAV details are distributed.

Your club will receive twelve passes (6 Ground Passes & 6 Club Passes) for entry in to the ground for your Combined Counties League & Cup fixtures. For division two, development and youth league games you will receive 3 passes. Ensure these are provided to people who should have these passes and will observe the league rules and respect for other clubs. You will be held responsible for their behaviour.

Ensure that there is at least one club representative travelling with the team, other than management team and players. These people should make their presence known to the officials of the home club when arriving and should attend the home clubs boardroom and take advantage of any hospitality provided before the match, at half time and after the match unless otherwise notified. League rule 38.6 specifies a maximum of 6 visiting officials should attend the boardroom or other segregated area.

Match Programmes

All clubs (Premier & Division One) must produce a match programme for home matches (Refer to League Rule 8.14). This must, as a minimum, include details of the players (name & playing number) of both sides, the colours in which the teams will play and details of the match officials. The league sponsors adverts must also be included. These will be sent to you before the start of the season.

The club secretary is responsible for seeing that the programme is produced. The role of programme editor is one that may be delegated to another person.

Be aware that any comments that appear in the club programme are attributed to the club. If any inappropriate criticism is made of the FA, County FA, the League, its officers, appointed match officials or any other club, you could find yourself on a charge with the County FA.

You are also required to provide details to your opponents for away games. This must be provided in adequate time to allow the programme to be produced. You are able to provide your information to the League who will post in the "Downloads" section of the league website under "Club Information". This is then available to all of your opponents when needed.

Match programmes must be provided to visiting officials of the opposing club and any league officials. You are also required to provide programmes in the dressing rooms for the players & match officials. If officials of the FA or county FA visit your ground for a match you should also provide them with a programme.

Match programmes may be produced electronically and be held on line. Links to the programme must be provided to visitors and spectators up to 24 hours before the match. The programme must be live for the whole of the current season.

MATCH DAY DUTIES

See “Suggested Hospitality Criteria For Home Clubs” later in this guide.

Match Balls & Substitution Boards

Match balls that meet the requirements of Law 2 of the Laws of Association Football and in accordance with the competition rules have to be provided. At least three must be available, refer to league rule 14.9. The Combined Counties League requires that the sponsor’s ball is used for all Combined Counties League & Cup matches. However, it is not mandatory for Division Two, Development, Youth & Women’s competitions but if you wish to use these match balls you are able to do so. Associate member clubs shall not receive an allocation of match balls but are able to purchase these at the discounted rate. The league also allows clubs to use these balls in other outside competitions.

Substitution boards must be made available by the home club for use during the match. Failure to have these available could mean the referee refuses to allow a substitution to take place and you may also pick up a fine.

Team Sheets

An official competition team sheet must be fully completed and handed to the match referee and opponents at least forty five [45] minutes prior to kick off. Rule 8.21. For Division Two, Development & Youth teams this is thirty [30] minutes prior to kick off.

After the match you are responsible for entering the details from the team sheet into Full Time. (See result sheets)

Texting of Results

Results of all matches, including competitions outside of the jurisdiction of this League, must be reported to the League Results Service immediately after the match and no later than 5.15pm (1.30pm for morning matches and 10.00pm for evening matches).

All Clubs must report their results using the SMS text messaging system. (See “Reporting Of Results Using Texting To Full Time” later in this guide).

Clubs playing at home without floodlights, where temporarily unavailable, should not delay reporting their result. Telephone the result as soon as it is practical to do so.

Where extra time is necessary in cup competitions, the 90 minutes score **must** be reported in by 5.10pm or immediately following the 90 minutes, and then a further thirty (30) minutes will be permitted for the final score. This means that you will need to report the result twice, once at full time and once after extra time including the result after penalties if applicable.

Clubs are reminded of the need to report the attendance at first team matches and the names of goal scorers to the competition as detailed below. It is advised that the result is reported immediately following the end of the match. Other information may be reported later as it is the result that must be conveyed to the press by a fixed deadline.

If you are playing away in an outside competition you still need to report your result to the league results service as well as to the appropriate results contact for the outside competition.

Attendances

Please include all attendees including club officials and non-paying guests and any season ticket holders. The attendance is not a measure of how many paying customers were at the game. You are not going to be penalised for giving the correct number.

All clubs should have a proper system in place for counting and analysing gate receipts that can be scrutinised upon request. This is an FA requirement.

The league requires that the attendance is reported on the result sheet, entered on the Full Time SMS message and entered into Full Time with the match result.

Goal Scorers

For all Combined Counties League matches the goal scorer information must be completed on the results sheet.

For all Premier & Division One League & Cup matches, the **home** Club is also required to report to the league the names of the scorers of ALL goals scored in the match, including those scored by the away team, plus the time that each goal was scored.

This information must also be entered into Full Time when providing the information from your result sheet. Under Player Statistics, after entering the names of those that took part the second page allows the goalscorers to be identified along with the time of the goals.

Paying of Match Officials

Payments should be made in accordance with current FA guidance. Match Officials **must** be paid in the match official's dressing room after the match where a cash payment is made. Payments must not be made in the clubhouse after a match. Electronic payments are permitted and must be completed with 48 hours.

Please inform the match officials how you intend to pay them in the match confirmation email.

Club Assistant Referees

Clubs are reminded that club individuals acting as Assistant Referees are entitled to the appropriate fee.

They do not have to accept but the Home Club must offer to make the payment.

Where the league is unable to appoint an Assistant Referee to any match or where the appointed Assistant Referees is unable to attend, it is the home club's responsibility to provide someone who is capable of filling the role of an Assistant Referee.

The league has a strategy to develop match official for NLS matches. This involves the use of the U18 & U23 divisions to effect the training and development of appropriate match officials. The league require clubs to consider supporting the league strategy which is of direct benefit to all NLS clubs. Where clubs support this strategy and enter their U18 & U23 team into the league competitions, these clubs will be given priority when there are match official shortages. Clubs which do not support the league strategy are more likely to need to provide a club assistant referee.

Results Sheets

Complete the appropriate sheets on the team sheet pad provided by the Combined Counties League, as soon as possible following the match, ensuring all details are correct. These must be scanned and emailed to the correct email address as soon as possible after the match: the email address to which they should be sent is shown at the foot of each form.

After the match you are also responsible for entering the details from the team sheet into Full Time. You must be a registered "Team Administrator" on Full Time with a login in order to do this. Follow the process in the WGS under "Team Officials" to register people with roles that are recognised as team administrators. Make sure you enter all of the information including red & yellow cards. You may be fined if you don't as these are checked by league officers.

Your Club Secretary will have to register using WGS and assign an appropriate role i.e. "Team Secretary". These roles appear as Team Administrators in Full Time. You then need to inform the league which of these should be assigned an account to allow them to log in and enter team sheet information.

Marking of Referees

Marking of referees for matches in the Premier Divisions & Division One must be submitted via MOAS which is the system used by the FA to appoint Level 4 officials.

If you have NOT received instructions from the FA please contact the FA directly.

moas@thefa.com or Chris.Wildey@thefa.com

Marks for remaining matches (Division Two, U23, U18 & Women's Cup) should be submitted on Full Time.

However, if you have any problems with Full Time, you may also submit these by email on the appropriate form to postmatchadmin@combinedcountiesleague.co.uk.

For Division Two, U23, U18 & Women's Cup matches, please refer to the GUIDE FOR MARKING OF REFEREES in the back of this guide for the regulations governing the marking of match officials.

If not using Full Time, The appropriate sheet of the results forms may be completed, scanned and sent to postmatchadmin@combinedcountiesleague.co.uk. However, you are now able to download and email the electronic form from the league website.

This must be within 48 hours of the match. Any mark of '60' or below should be accompanied with constructive supporting comments.

Referee Reports

After each game the referee will email a representative of both teams to confirm which players have been cautioned or sent off. This email is for information only (not discussion) and will assist Secretaries in both completing their result sheets and knowing what the fine is for when you get it! In addition, any breaches of rule that the referee reports to the League are entered online and a confirmation will be sent to the club secretary.

Other Secretarial Duties

Setting Up Your Roles for Full-Time Access

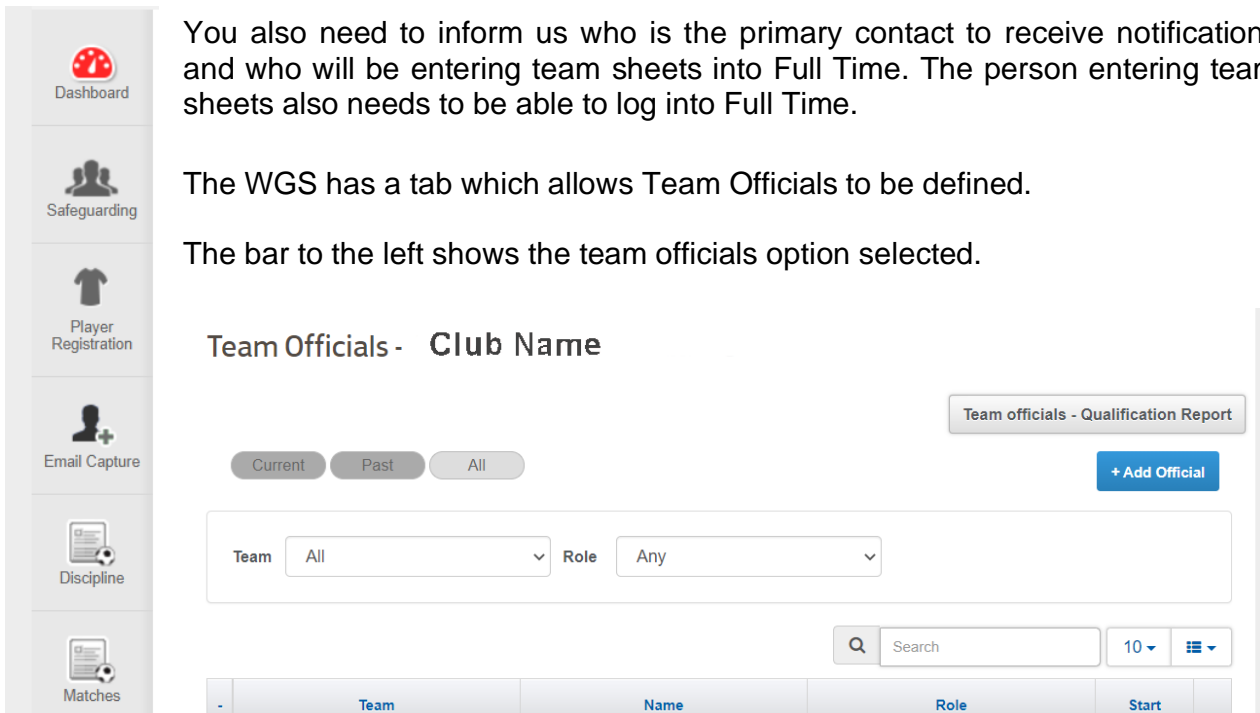
Your Club Secretary will need to access WGS in order to assign roles.

In order to allocate people to the role of Team Administrator you will have to register the people using WGS and assign them one of the roles that are available i.e. "Team Secretary", "Team Manager", "Team Assistant Manager" or "Team Coach". All of these roles are able to perform the role of Team Administrator in Full Time. You then need to inform the league which of these should be assigned to receive and respond to SMS messages.

You also need to inform us who is the primary contact to receive notifications and who will be entering team sheets into Full Time. The person entering team sheets also needs to be able to log into Full Time.

The WGS has a tab which allows Team Officials to be defined.

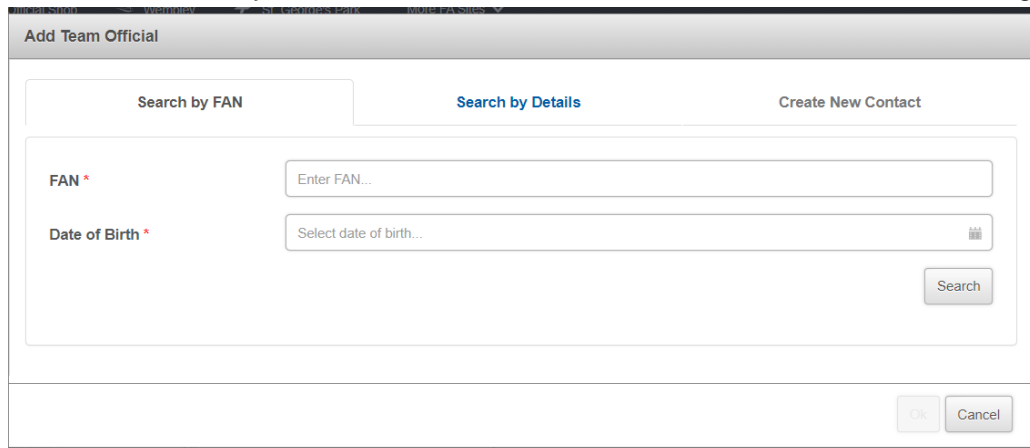
The bar to the left shows the team officials option selected.



The screenshot shows the WGS interface. On the left is a vertical sidebar with icons for Dashboard, Safeguarding, Player Registration, Email Capture, Discipline, Matches, Finance, Club Officials, Team Officials (highlighted), and Teams. The main content area is titled 'Team Officials - Club Name'. At the top right of this area is a tab labeled 'Team officials - Qualification Report'. Below the title are three buttons: 'Current', 'Past', and 'All'. To the right is a blue button labeled '+ Add Official'. Below these are two dropdown menus: 'Team' set to 'All' and 'Role' set to 'Any'. There is a search bar with a magnifying glass icon and a 'Search' button. Below the search bar is a table with columns: Team, Name, Role, and Start. The table is currently empty.

You should also see the above image which will have a list of your current team officials. There is a blue button allowing you to add a new team official.

You must choose your first team which is with the Combined Counties League.



The screenshot shows the 'Add Team Official' form. At the top are three tabs: 'Search by FAN', 'Search by Details' (which is selected), and 'Create New Contact'. Below the tabs are two input fields: 'FAN *' with a placeholder 'Enter FAN...' and 'Date of Birth *' with a placeholder 'Select date of birth...' and a calendar icon. A 'Search' button is located to the right of the Date of Birth field. At the bottom of the form are 'Ok' and 'Cancel' buttons.

You will need to choose the person you wish to add as a team official by entering their FAN and their DOB.

Clicking the search button should find the individual. If the individual cannot be found you should contact your County FA for assistance.

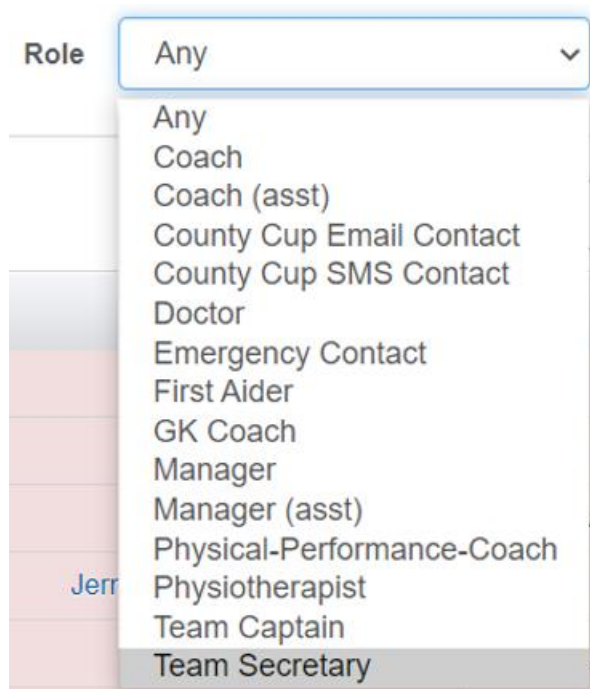
You will now select their role.

Again we suggest that the Team Administrator should be assigned as “Team Secretary” in WGS.

When done you should see this person in your team officials list against your first team.

The WGS will then synchronise with Full Time and pass this person and all of their details across.

You should inform us whether this is the person that is named on email notifications about fixture/match official changes. The league will set this person to be the Primary Contact. All of your Team Administrators will receive these emails.



These can all be the same person or you can have different people performing these tasks. For example, it could be your team manager, plus one other person, who send the SMS message with the match result. It could be your match secretary who entered the team sheets after a match and fixture notifications could go to the club secretary or match day secretary.

Note:Some of the screen shot above have changed recently due to the WGS update issued by the FA.

The FA provide the latest information at this location

<https://grassrootstechnology.thefa.com/support/solutions/articles/48001203044-officials-clubs-portal#Adding-Team-Officials>

The following table shows the roles that need to be assigned.

Role	Purpose	Name
Prime Contact	To be named contact in fixture/match official change emails	
SMS Contact(s)	To respond to SMS messages with match results	
Team Secretary(s)	To enter team sheets into Full Time	

We suggest that you use this table to provide information to the league.

Fines

Make sure that you read the League Rules & Regulations including the Interpretation of Rules in this guide. Knowing what is expected should help avoid fines. If in doubt ask for advice. League officers are always willing to advise you.

However, It is inevitable that some clubs will incur a fine or two during the season. It is just as inevitable that, on occasions, clubs will feel that that the fine has been issued in error for whatever reason.

If that is the case, there is a formal appeal procedure that you can follow which is shown in the handbook as part of rule 16. Please remember though that there is a

fee to be paid (currently £50) should you decide to go down that route. If the appeal is lost then so is the appeal fee, so clubs and secretaries need to consider carefully whether or not there are genuine grounds for appeal before going ahead.

Before embarking upon a formal appeal, the League does allow an informal opportunity, whereby if you think there has been an error, you can contact the Officer who issued the fine (this information will be shown on the fine sheet). If the League Officer accepts that there has been an error, or further information has come to light that might lead to the conclusion that the fine should not have been issued, he/she will agree to rescind it and will advise the Fines Secretary accordingly. If the fine has been issued by a match referee, the Referees' Secretary may be able to assist. Please be courteous when you contact the relevant League Officer. It is stating the obvious to say that ranting and raving will not help your case.

If the League Officer does not accept that the fine should be rescinded, you then need to choose whether to accept the fine or submit a formal appeal, as per rule 16.

If it is a "standard" fine, issued for any number of reasons, such as bench infringements, late submission of team/result sheet etc., any appeal must be sent to the League Secretary in the first instance. You have 14 days in which to appeal against a fine and it can be done by email initially but cannot be considered unless/until you have paid the appeal fee of £50. If the appeal is upheld, the fine will be cancelled and your appeal fee will be returned. If not, your appeal fee will be forfeited.

Appeals will generally be considered by the Management Committee on the basis of the documents before them, including your appeal statement. Clubs can choose to appear personally at the appropriate Management Committee, Discipline subcommittee or Board meeting if they wish to do so.

If your appeal is rejected, you then have the opportunity to appeal to the Football Association and, again, the procedure is shown within Rule 16. Generally speaking though, you need to be confident of winning the appeal as the fee for an FA appeal is £250, which is likely to be forfeited if you lose the case and there may also be costs on top.

For more serious offences (e.g. failure to fulfil a fixture, ineligible player, etc.) you will be charged with the relevant offence by the League (usually by an emailed letter). You then have 14 days in which to either accept the charge or give your reasons why you think the charge is erroneous. The matter will then be considered at the next Management Meeting and if you are found guilty of the offence in question, you will be advised by email with details of the fine imposed.

Again, if you feel that the fine has been imposed in error, you have the right of appeal to the Football Association.

All fines are issued by the Fines Officer. **HOWEVER, EVEN IF YOU THINK A FINE IS WRONG, YOU SHOULD NOT CONTACT THE FINES OFFICER AS HE WILL NOT HAVE SPECIFIC DETAILS OF THE CASE. HIS ROLE IS TO ISSUE FINES PASSED TO HIM EITHER BY COLLEAGUES ON THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OR BY REFEREES.**

The time allowed to pay any fine will be shown on the fine sheet, or letter, as appropriate. Usually you will have 28 days from the date of issue in which to pay any fine. It is very important that you pay within the stipulated time, as further fines can and will be issued for non/late payment. If you pay a fine electronically, you **MUST** inform the Fines Secretary by email that you have done so giving payment & fines references.

Fixture Changes

The League publishes an annual fixtures list. Postponements & commitments in FA & other outside competitions mean that fixtures sometimes have to change.

Read and check the league bulletin each week to ensure fixtures are correct for your own club. Any discrepancies should be immediately brought to the attention of the League Fixtures Secretary.

Changes are also notified by automated email from Full-Time. When a change to a fixture or Match Official is made in the Full Time it will generate an email notification which will be addressed to your Primary Contact, as defined in Full Time, and copied to your other "Team Administrators" held in Full Time. Should you want someone else to receive these notifications you will need to set them up with a Team Official role in the WGS. (See "Setting Up Your Roles for Full-Time Access" above)

Lodging a Complaint or Protest

If you feel that the league has made a mistake then you should lodge a protest to a league decision. The league officers are volunteers who give up their time to run the league. They are not infallible and will always admit a mistake if one has been made. However, you must provide evidence to show that a mistake has been made when you submit your protest.

Complaints must be made in writing to the League General Secretary or to the appropriate Secretary of that division or competition.

Please refer to League Rule 16. The rules governing a protest are clear. You must include the protest fee and it must be made in the time allowed. If a protest is submitted outside of the time limit or without the protest fee it will not be processed by the league.

The written decision following the protest, should you be unsuccessful, will give you direction upon how to appeal to the FA. The procedure for appeals to the FA is also contained in the League Handbook.

Outside Competitions

Your first team may not enter any other competition with the exception of the FA Cup; FA Vase or County Senior Cup to the county to which your club was first affiliated to without the prior permission of the Combined Counties League.

Notice of your intent to enter an outside competition is normally submitted on the Club Particulars & Membership Form. Under normal circumstances, the league will give permission automatically and not object to entry. However, clubs with a larger than average number of postponements due to weather conditions may be refused entry into some of these competitions.

Note that you must also apply to these competitions directly for entry which will be granted at the discretion of the organising body of each of these competitions.

The result of any match in an approved outside competition must be reported to the league results service.

Travel to the Channel Islands

The FA allocated Jersey Bulls FC to the Combined Counties League on their admission to the National League System. The Combined Counties League have previous experience with travel to the Channel Islands when Guernsey joined the league in 2011.

In order to allow a Channel Island club membership they must meet certain criteria which includes the following:-

- Jersey Bulls FC shall organise and pay for air travel to and from the island for up to 25 People which shall cover the following clubs members.

Players	16 (Sixteen)
Team Management	4 (Four)
(Manager, Assistant Manager, Physio, Coach)	
Club Officials	5 (Five)
(Chairman, Secretary & other members of the board or management committee of the visiting clubs)	
- The visiting clubs shall have the choice of departure airport (Gatwick or Heathrow). This choice must be made as early as possible to allow Jersey Bulls FC to arrange appropriate flights. At some peak times of year and for a rearranged match it may not be possible to provide the selected departure airport. However, Jersey Bull FC shall do the utmost to meet the selection.
- Jersey Bulls FC shall organise and pay for one night's accommodation, if required (up to 25 persons) for the opposition club.
 It is expected that visiting clubs shall return the same day where a flight is available. Where a flight is available (7:15 pm) the club shall be compelled to take it. (Note: flight times may change depending upon airline schedules which vary throughout the year).
 Where there is no suitable evening flight available an overnight stay will be provided. This is most likely for matches in the winter months when the airlines restrict the number of options.
 Clubs may also travel on a Friday and stay overnight allowing an early kick off to take place in order to return on an early evening flight on a Saturday.
 The hotel generally to be used should be a 3 star hotel in an appropriate location to allow easy travel to/from the ground and to/from the airport.
 It shall be allowed for the players (16) to "double up", two to a room with twin beds. All others shall have a dedicated room unless requested otherwise.
- Transport shall be provided between the airport, the hotel and the ground.
- A pre-match lunch shall be provided upon arrival (on top of normal match day hospitality requirements).
- Jersey Bulls FC shall provide kit and training equipment as required (Training Balls, Bibs etc)
- Appropriate Insurance must be arranged by Jersey Bulls FC to cover all clubs in respect of medical (injuries that need hospital treatment) and travelling arrangements.
- Jersey Bulls FC shall organise and pay for air travel to and from the island for the match official assigned to the match. The match officials may travel on the same flights as the visiting club.
- During August it is holiday time and peak visitor time in Jersey leading to higher costs and lower availability. During August Jersey Bulls may play all matches away from home.

Note: The 25 places for the team and officials is a maximum. Should you be unable to fill all places with appropriate people you shall **not** include friends, wives, girlfriends or other family members. It is **not** allowed to make up the numbers. Should a club be found to do so then they will be charged by the league and also face paying the cost for the additional people.

If places are booked and people fail to travel without good reason then a charge may be made for these tickets.

If you are unable to take up all 25 places then you must give at least 72 hours notice to Jersey Bulls if this fact so that the number of places may be reduced.

Costs associated with parking at the Airport (Parking Fees) shall be covered by the visiting club.

Any excess luggage charges due to the carriage of kit shall be covered by the visiting club. Jersey are supplying warmup kit and training equipment so you only need to take your playing kit and bench kit along with physio supplies which spread around the luggage allowance for your group will not attract any excess luggage charges.

PLAYER REGISTRATIONS

Many new secretaries hit problems applying the rules regarding player registrations. Players often sign for a club without giving all of the details of their recent background in football.

It is your responsibility to get that information and ensure that the player is eligible to sign for your club. You must ensure that the player does not owe money to a former club, is not suspended by any County Association, is not under contract to another club, does not need international clearance and is not already registered for a club in the league.

You need to be familiar with the FA rules, county association rules and the league player status & registration Rule 6.

Most of what you need to do is now handled by the FA Player Registration System but you still need to be aware of the rules. You will have access to the WGS and the Club Portal for the registration of players. It is not the intent of this guide to tell you how this system works, you should refer to your County FA for guidance on this system.

Player Status

The status of a player can be qualified as contract players or non-contract.

A contract player is one that has duly signed the appropriate forms which have been submitted to The Football Association; a Players Contract, form G2, together with the agreement as issued by The Football Association.

That player may only play for the Club with whom the contract has been signed under the jurisdictions of the league in which the club play and The Football Association. The only way to be released from this contract, unless of a serious breach of misconduct, is to transfer the form to another Club (Football Association form H) or for the contract to be mutually cancelled between the parties concerned.

A non-contract player is one that has signed the relevant league form for a Club or otherwise registered using the FA Player Registration System under the rules of the League in which the club participates. A player who is non-contract can play for other clubs in other leagues as long as they have completed the registration process for any other team and have discharged any financial commitments to other clubs.

A non-contract player may move to another club in the same competition as long as the relevant transfer process is completed fully and correctly. Note that FA rules regarding the approach to a player who is registered with another club must be obeyed including the seven day notice period. A club may only issue a seven day approach one player at a time at another club and may only issue another seven day approach after 28 days have passed. The registration of a non-contract player expires at the end of the season and they must be re-registered for the following season.

International Clearance

It is your responsibility to obtain International clearance for a player from overseas. Overseas means that the player has played outside of England [that also means in Wales; Northern Ireland and Scotland]; it doesn't matter whether the player is English or foreign, he needs International Clearance if he has been playing abroad.

The player must have a valid international clearance certificate to be able to sign a registration form or a contract form. The Football Association will always answer any

requests with regards to the players' eligibility. Forms are available from the FA Registrations dept.

The league may declare that the player's registration is valid but if it later transpires that the player required International clearance from the FA and this was not obtained then you will be at fault. The registration with the league will be declared invalid and penalties will be imposed by The FA & the league.

The International Clearance Certificate is now only an email. It is suggested that clubs forward a copy of this email and pass it to the player concerned so that he can show verification of international clearance when he moves to his next club or plays for a club with which he is dual registered.

Signing a Player from another Club

If a player that you wish to sign for your club, is registered for another club (in this league or in another league), you must first give 7 days notice of an approach to that player in line with FA rules. This applies even if the player approaches you and wishes to join your club. Failure to give 7 days notice could land you with a charge of making an illegal approach to a player. When signing a player through the FA Player Registration System you will be warned if the player is already registered for a club in the league. The system will offer you the option to make an approach using the system to inform the club that you wish to engage with the player.

At the end of the 7 day period you may talk to the player and if he agrees to sign for your Club you have a total of twenty eight days (including the 7 days lapsed) in which to complete the signing of the player. If the player is registered for a club in the same league the player has to be transferred using the FA Player Registration System, unless the club has de-registered the player.

You are only allowed to make one approach for a player at a Club in twenty eight days; you must wait 28 days before approaching another player at the same club. You are not allowed to make more than one approach for the same player in one season. Please refer to the FA Handbook, Rules of The Association; look for "Player Status Rules".

Checking that a Player is Eligible

When registering a player, it is often advisable to contact the county FA office and ask if the player is eligible or has any suspensions pending. The county offices are generally very helpful in this respect. The FA Whole Game System/Player Registration System will also have the data regarding a player status. If you believe that this is not correct then contact the County FA office.

It is your responsibility to do this and if you register the player with the league you are confirming that you have made the appropriate checks. When registering a player the league will check that the player is not already registered for another member club and that the player is eligible by way of age. If it is later found that the player requires international clearance or is otherwise ineligible you will be at fault.

Registration Forms

To register a player to play in the Combined Counties League, the player must be submitted to the league using the FA Player Registration System plus a fully completed Combined Counties League registration form must be completed, scanned and emailed to the League Registrations Secretary. Mandatory details for each player are First Name, Surname, Date of Birth, Address (including Postcode) and at least one telephone number. In the case of Youth players, the completed

form MUST also include the parent's or guardian's signature & address. Registration forms for the current season are available for download from the league website.

The league will accept and approve the registration on the FA Player Registration System clearing the player to be able to play. Being given leave to play a player in a match following the initial steps of a registration does not alleviate the club from completing the registration process. The fully completed & signed player registration form must be received within the specified time otherwise the player will have been ineligible to play. The original form must be scanned and emailed to the League Registrations Secretary to be received before the 5 day deadline.

If the form is not received within the five days, the players' registration will be suspended, and they cannot play.

An incomplete registration form will not be approved and if the completed form does not match the Player Registration System details, the registration will be cancelled.

The original registration form is held by the club until the 30th June at the conclusion of the current playing season. The form must be produced if requested by the competition. This is only likely to be required if there is a dispute over a players registration.

As per League Rules, registrations can be made up to 4 hours prior to the advertised kick off time.

Please also note if the player is on an FA contract, the contract must be lodged with The Football Association before the player can play albeit by email before the original form is posted. The Football Association working office hours are (approx 8.30am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday). The contract receipt email must also be forwarded to the League Registrations Secretary.

Clubs are strongly recommended to check on the Player Registration System and confirm that a player has been registered before the player plays in a match in the competition. The fully completed & signed player registration form must be received within the specified time otherwise the player will have been ineligible to play.

Loan Players

The short term & long term loan scheme is available to clubs in the Combined Counties League. Loans apply to the movement of contract players only.

A player who is contracted to a Club in the Isthmian/Southern/Northern Premier/National League will be able to play for a Combined Counties League Club if the appropriate loan documents are completed in line with FA and league rules & regulations. You may also take a contract player on a short/long term loan from another Combined Counties League/other step 5/6 league club.

Please note that a players registration with a club playing at Step 4 or above will not show on the FA Player Registration System as these leagues use a different player registration system.

There is no such thing as an official loan between clubs if the player concerned is a non-contract player. In such a case, it is effectively a gentleman's agreement whereby Club A allows Club B to sign the player for an agreed period. A transfer will be involved if both clubs are in the Combined Counties League. At the end of the agreed period, a further transfer will be required to enable the player to return to his previous club.

Player Suspensions

Refer to the FA disciplinary rules governing suspensions (Rule 11 D). A copy is available from the FA website (<https://www.thefa.com/football-rules-governance/lawsandrules/fa-handbook/>). Clubs with teams in Step 5 & 6 leagues are subject to match based suspensions these are detailed as Category 5 in the FA Handbook.

Where a player is under suspension it means suspension from playing all football for his Saturday side which also includes any midweek matches for that side. Sunday football is treated separately. If the player is sent off or suspended as a result of playing for his Team in the Premier Divisions or Division One of the Combined Counties League the ONLY matches that will clear the player of his suspension are those of his Combined Counties League Team.

Qualifying matches for clubs in the Combined Counties League are Premier Division North, Premier Division South, Division One, Premier Challenge Cup, Division One Cup, FA Cup, FA Vase and the Club's most senior parented County Cup matches. Other matches in this period, including those in outside competitions may not qualify towards the suspension but the player will miss these matches as he is suspended from all football.

For clubs who affiliate to two Counties, matches in the non-parented County Cup do not count towards the clearance of the suspension, even though the player remains suspended.

All suspensions resulting from on-field offences under the jurisdiction of the referee will automatically commence 7 days from the date of the offence. However, depending if another suspension is in force, the matches the player misses to complete the suspension may not always be the first match or matches on or after that 7th day.

If you are uncertain about the matches that a player will be suspended for, you should contact your County FA for advice.

The County FA will issue you the relevant paperwork, electronically, regarding the player's suspension. However, if the paperwork from the County FA does not arrive it does not mean that the player is not suspended. The 7 day period still applies and you should contact your County FA office if you have not received the paperwork or notification from the Whole Game System. The FA Player Registration System will contain information of suspensions from the Whole Game System but may not be current at the time a suspension begins.

The paperwork issued must be signed by the player & the club secretary and you will be required to detail the qualifying matches for the suspension.

You also need to keep track of any fixture changes issued by the league as this may change the matches for when a player is suspended. You will be required to inform the County FA immediately so that they are aware of the change of qualifying matches for the suspension.

It is the Club Secretary's responsibility to keep a good record of all matches for each player and any suspensions that they incur. If you overlook a match and the player misses the wrong matches you may face further action from the County FA. You may also lose points if you play an ineligible player in a match.

SUGGESTED HOSPITALITY CRITERIA FOR HOME CLUBS

Refer to League Rule 38 for details of mandatory requirements.

Before a Match

1. The changing rooms must be prepared and open at least 1½ hours before the scheduled kick-off time. Ensure that the power is turned on to ensure hot water will be available when required.

Upon Arrival

1. Ensure that someone, a club official, is delegated to meet the visiting team, its officials and the Match Officials and direct them to the Dressing Rooms/Clubhouse etc.
2. It is not mandatory but if your resources allow, supply squash/tea/coffee to players and match officials before the game.
3. If the visiting club officials have properly identified themselves, make tea/coffee available to them either in the boardroom or within a specially designated area.
4. Ensure that the required number of programmes are made available for players, match, visiting club & league officials prior to any first team match.
5. If possible, display the team details on a notice in the clubhouse or adjacent to the ground entrance.

At Half-Time

1. Make sure that drinks are prepared and ready in the dressing rooms. If the weather is hot, ask beforehand if clubs/match officials would prefer a cold drink.
2. Make sure that drinks and light refreshments (biscuits usually) are ready and waiting in the boardroom or designated area for visiting officials. Try to use a proper table with a clean table cloth. Ensure that you have someone to act as host for your visitors.

At Full-Time

1. Make sure that drinks are prepared and ready in the dressing rooms. Arrange for players' sandwiches to be served after the match. It is recommended that these are **not** served in the dressing rooms but in an area set aside in the clubhouse afterwards. Make sure though that any "rogue elements" from within your own club or elsewhere do not get to the refreshments first.
2. Entertain visiting club officials within the boardroom/designated area. It is not mandatory to supply alcoholic drinks although it is the normal practice to offer one such drink to each member of the visiting officials.
3. Invite the match officials into your boardroom or designated area and make sure that they receive refreshments. Irrespective of what may have happened during the match or what you think of the referee, make them as welcome as possible. Referees are usually pleased to discuss things that have happened if they are asked in a polite manner.

Visiting Clubs

1. Your officials, in accordance with Rule 38.2, should make themselves known to the home club, especially if the clubs have not previously met. Home clubs should not have to make assumptions about who the visiting officials are.
2. Dress reasonably smartly if you are a club official. Some clubs have rules about standards of dress within their boardrooms/entertainment areas.
3. Once your officials have received the hospitality of the home club, make use of their bar if you're not driving. It is invariably noticed and appreciated by home clubs.
4. Most important – make sure that you and your players take up the hospitality offered by your hosts. This is a league requirement, see League Rule 38.

RECOMMENDED PROCEDURE FOR THE GUIDANCE OF CLUBS AND REFEREES IN DETERMINING THE SUITABILITY OF GROUNDS IN ADVERSE WEATHER CONDITIONS

Each Club must take every precaution to ensure that its ground is in a fit playing condition.

When the regional weather conditions are known to be extreme (e.g. prolonged severe frost, clear water logging or heavy snow) then the game can be postponed at the discretion of the League following consultation with the appropriate League Secretary / Officer. League Rules will apply; this is not an issue for the match day Referee. Should a Competition decide to agree to an early postponement under such circumstances there will be no requirement for a pitch inspection.

In all other circumstances and subject to the time and travelling distance, the match Referee should be called in to make a decision. In the event of the match Referee being unable to carry out the inspection, the Home Club must select a suitable alternative level 4 Referee.

Should it not be possible to identify an appropriate Match Official, the Appointing Authority (the Combined Counties League Referees Secretary) will determine a suitable person to carry out the inspection.

The home clubs shall advise the visiting club that they are contacting the match referee to perform a pitch inspection. The time of the inspection shall be given to the opposition and they shall be invited to be in attendance during the inspection. The visiting club may decline to be present but may request that they speak to the referee at the time of the inspection.

If a specific League Rule exists where the timing of a pitch inspection is stated, this will apply but is a League issue only.

Prior to reaching a decision the Referee who is making the inspection must:

- Consult with the match Referee prior to the inspection
- Consult with the match Referee during / after the inspection to mutually agree on a decision prior to notifying the Home Club Secretary or Club Chairman and the appropriate League Secretary (or Chairman if the Secretary is not available).

Prior to reaching a decision the Referee who is making the inspection should consider the following:

- The existing condition of the playing surface in conjunction with the prevailing weather conditions as previously confirmed with the local weather authority.
- The views of the Home Club Groundsman in terms of local knowledge and draining capabilities in the event of standing water
- The manpower available to the Home Club to carry out any necessary work to make the ground playable
- The time the visiting Club are due to commence their journey
- Whether or not the ground (playing area) is dangerous (e.g. ice / frost)
- Whether or not that the spectator standing areas are dangerous (e.g. ice / frost)
- Whether or not conditions are or could turn farcical
- In the event of fog check with the local weather authority re possible clearance, also bearing in mind the visitors travelling arrangements if the fog is known to be widespread. If fog is the problem then the match Referee should also consider whether or not the paying spectators would be able to view the whole area of play.

If after consultation with the match Referee, the ground is declared fit and the away Clubs instructed to travel, then only in exceptional circumstances should the match Referee reverse the decision.

If an early inspection has not been carried out and the match Referee arrives at the ground to find the playing conditions in doubt due to unexpected deterioration in the weather, he should first consider as many of the above points before committing himself to a decision.

In the event of a pitch inspection being carried out by a Referee other than the match Referee, a fee shall be offered, in line with the fees tariff, paid by the Home Club. If the appointed Match Officials have reported to the ground they are entitled to half their match fee (which is inclusive of travel expenses) if the match is not played.

If there is any doubt as to this procedure, the Referees Secretary should be the first point of contact.

Clubs in a ground share must not postpone a match on the instruction of the host clubs groundsman. The league procedure must be followed.

IMPORTANT DATES IN THE ANNUAL CALENDAR

Last Thursday in March

5pm - latest date and time for registrations for the current season.

March 31st Latest date for the returning of trophies won in the previous season. League rule 18.

March 31st Date by which a club must notify, in writing, its intention to withdraw any of its teams from the Competition at the end of the season. Rule 15.

March 31st Latest date to have in place the facilities to obtain a required grading.

March 31st Latest date to have in place a ground share for the following season. Rule 2.3.1. other than in exceptional circumstances.

April 1st Closing date for entry forms for The Football Association; FA Cup and FA Vase

June 1st Date by which clubs must provide the league with a list of contract players. Rule 6.7.

June 1st Club County Affiliation forms must have been returned or submitted on WGS

June 1st - 30th inc The recognised close season for The Football Association [This means any non-contract player may be approached for transfer without being subject to a seven day letter during this date range]

Fourteen days prior to the AGM The League Club Particulars form must have been returned

Seven days prior to the AGM The League Annual subscription must be paid (unless instructed otherwise)

July – August Fourteen days prior to the first fixture of the season. At least sixteen players must be registered for the team in the NLS and eleven players for each other team.

August 1st Clubs Annual Statement of Accounts should be with the County Football Association Fourteen days prior to league start.

September 1st Date by which clubs must provide list of FA qualified first aiders and welfare officers to the League Secretary

October 31st Latest date for the submission of proposals for alterations to Rules. League Rule 19.

INTERPRETATION OF LEAGUE RULES

The League rules are issued by the FA as the Standard League Rules. However, these were written mainly for leagues that play at Steps 1-4. The Board has deemed it necessary to provide an interpretation of some the FA Standard rules. This is included to provide guidance to member clubs.

If in doubt refer to the wording of the rule which shall take precedence.

2 MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

- 2.5 This fee associated with this rule is to cover any ground inspection required to ascertain that the facilities comply.

4 POWER OF THE BOARD

4.10 Representative Matches

- a) Clubs shall place their players at the disposal of the League for such match or matches as may be deemed necessary by the Board.
- b) A player selected to play for the League and unable to accept the invitation will, only in exceptional circumstances, be allowed to play for his club in the League on the date of the match. Written consent must be obtained from the League General Secretary.
- c) Players who represent the League may be given an award at the discretion of the Board.
- d) If a match is arranged on a Saturday there should be no League programme on that day. However, where two clubs are not providing players for the Representative team, their fixture may proceed.

6 REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

6.1 Player Registration

Where a Club has sent in a registration via the FA Player Registration System or by email the onus is upon the Club to ensure that the player concerned is eligible to play. Clubs are strongly recommended to look at FULL-TIME or contact the League Registration Secretary before the player plays in a match in the competition.

However, it will not be mandatory to contact the League Registration Secretary beforehand. Being given leave to play a player in a match following the initial steps of a registration does not alleviate the club from completing the registration process.

Registration forms can be downloaded from the League's official web site.

6.4 Registrations and Registration Procedures

- 6.4.2 A register containing the names of all players registered with each club, with the date of registration, shall be kept and maintained on FULL-TIME by the League Registrations Secretary and shall be open to the inspection, with due notice, of any duly appointed member club representative at times mutually arranged with the League Registrations Secretary.

TRANSFERS

- 6.5.2 Should a club object to the transfer of a player it should state its objections, in writing, to the League General Secretary and to the player concerned, within seven days of receipt of the application. Upon receipt of an objection to a transfer, the matter shall be referred to the Board for a decision.

The cancellation of a player's registration is at the sole discretion of the club which holds the registration. There is no compulsion for a club to de-register a player whom has left the club. The registration may be held by that club until the end of the current season or until the player transfers to another club in accordance with rule 6.5.

The Board, in accordance with FA Rules, have not introduced regulations for the approach of Players between Clubs of the Competition. The regulations in the FA handbook shall apply.

Transfer fees, player registrations and player de-registrations will be invoiced by the league at the end of the season. This is a benefit to clubs who will not have to pay these fees until the season is over.

6.9 Playing An Ineligible Player

Where the playing of an unregistered or otherwise ineligible player or players is found to be a deliberate act the Board may call an Extraordinary General Meeting to consider the expulsion of the club at fault.

7 CLUB COLOURS

- 7.1 The League General Secretary may request that shirts be submitted to him if complaints are received as to lack of distinguishing colours and the Board may prohibit the use of any shirts or shorts that they consider unsuitable.

The nominated Club colours will be for first, development, youth & women's teams. Only one set of home colours per club.

8 PLAYING OF MATCHES

- 8.1 The Board are required by The FA to target the latter end of April as the date upon which the normal playing season of the competition shall terminate. However, depending upon cup runs and prevailing weather conditions the season may be extended into May with permission from The FA. Clubs shall be compelled to play until the season is complete and shall keep their home ground available.

- 8.4 This rule shall also apply to Step 4 or above League fixtures (where ground sharing is in effect).

No fixtures will take place on New Years Day unless it falls on a Saturday.

This rule applies to the County Senior Cup Competition for Premier Division Clubs or Premier/Intermediate/Junior Cup Competition for clubs in other divisions.

- 8.6 Where floodlights are not available, during the period from the end of BST in October until the 15th February in the following year, all Saturday games will kick-off at 2pm. Evening kick-off's will be as determined by the Board. Where floodlights are installed and meet the grading criteria requirements these must be used to facilitate evening kick off matches.

- 8.9 Consent will only be granted on the clear understanding that the ruling set out in Rule 8.4 above is strictly adhered to and is recognised by the ruling body organising the said outside competition and also that all matches within the competition concerned are to be played on days other than Saturday except for competitions arranged by The Football Association.

- 8.12 All official communication to be received by these means.

- 8.13 Clubs will also give details of the location of the ground. Clubs may do so via email with a read receipt enabled. Should a read receipt not be received then a call should be made.

8.14 Where physical programmes are produced at least three complimentary programmes shall be provided in the visiting team dressing room, three in the match official's dressing room and a maximum of six programmes for visiting club officials. Also match programmes shall be provided for visiting League Officials. Match programmes are to be provided prior to the start of the match. Where electronic programmes are produced, this should be notified in the match confirmation.

An acceptable match programme shall include any official sponsor provided advertisements which shall be forwarded to members by the Board.

This rule only applies to Step 5 & 6 matches played under the auspices of the Competition.

8.17 "Policy for Issue of Match Day Passes"

The competition provides each member club in Step 5 & 6 with six (6) passes (Ground Passes), valid for one season, to allow the holders to obtain free admission at any match played under the auspices of the Competition except for League Cup Finals. A further six (6) passes (Club Passes) are provided to allow the holders to obtain free admission only to matches that involve the pass holder's club.

It is your responsibility to ensure these passes are provided to people who are bonafide members of your club and in a role which warrants the use of these passes (manager, director, club officer, committee member) and will observe the league rules and respect for other clubs. You will be held responsible for their behaviour.

Further passes will be issued to clubs with teams in Division Two and the Development & Youth competitions. For each team entered there will be three (3) ground passes. These will be marked with the name of the club and the competition. These passes are not valid for entry into first team matches (Step 5 & 6). However, the six ground passes for first teams are valid for entry to Division Two, Development & Youth matches.

Home clubs should check these passes at the gate and allow entry for any valid pass holder.

Although there are 12 passes issued, only 6 visiting officials should attend the board room or segregated area for hospitality unless the home club is willing to admit additional visiting officials.

8.21 Clubs will use the official form provided by the league.

8.24 Referees shall report all cases of clubs starting with incomplete teams.

A minimum of seven players will constitute a team for a match in the Competition.

The intention of this rule is not to interfere with normal team selection by clubs, but to prevent clubs deliberately fielding a weakened team in order to unreasonably reserve players for another game or to boost the strength of another or lower team. It is not intended that clubs must field higher team players in lower teams when the higher team has no engagement. If in the opinion of the Board the substance of spirit of the rule is obviously being disregarded, the club or clubs concerned may be called to account for its/their actions and shall be subject to such decisions as the Board may determine, despite the fact that Rule 8.23 has not been infringed.

8.25 The Competition will only expect eight seats in the technical area in accordance with FA grading criteria.

8.26 Refer to the latest updates to the Rules of the Game.

Refer to the "National League System Ground Grading Criteria" in this handbook.

The Technical Area, as defined in Law V. International board decision No. 14, shall be considered as extending one metre on either side of the designated seating

area, and shall extend forward to a distance of one metre away from the touchline. Markings are required to define the area.

8.29 All other persons shall remain outside the playing area and behind the barrier at all times.

8.35 The result form shall be the appropriate copy of the team sheet, as supplied by the Competition.

Results shall also be reported by SMS text message using the FULL-TIME system or by telephone only where necessary.

The details from the team sheet shall also be entered on Full Time against the match in question. The team statistics must be completed in full including details of attendance, goalscores, red & yellow cards and substitutions.

8.41 The reporting of attendance and goal scorers applies to NLS Division League & Cup matches only.

Results must be reported immediately following the conclusion of each home Competition match. However, the following deadlines apply. Afternoon matches - no later than 5.15pm; morning matches - no later than 1.30pm and for evening matches - no later than 10.00pm.

Where extra time is necessary in cup competitions, the 90 minutes score must be reported in by 5.10pm, and then a further thirty (30) minutes will be permitted for the final score.

Any club playing in any competition outside the jurisdiction of this League shall also report the result of their match under the terms of this rule.

Should a club be fined for this offence on more than two occasions in any one season, the fine on the third occasion and subsequent occasions will be increased to an amount decided by the board (See the fines tariff in the handbook).

For first team matches only, the home club must advise the Fixture Secretary, either by phone, fax or e-mail, of the names of the scorers of all goals scored during the match and the times scored. The deadline for these details is no later than 12.00 noon on the Sunday if the match is on a Saturday, or no later than 10.00 pm on the following day if a midweek match.

8.42 In this rule, the term "Appointing Authority" shall refer to the League Referees and Assistant Referees Secretaries, and the League Fixtures Secretary. These officers may be informed by text or email.

This procedure must be followed for the postponement of any match, once it has appeared in the match appointments bulletin.

10 FINANCIAL RECORDS

10.1 Clubs are expected to settle all accounts payable to the competition via electronic payments from an account in the name of the club. Annual subscriptions must be paid in this manner.

10.4 The League will not implement the equalisation scheme and will continue to define an inclusive fee. As such, that there will be no need for equalisation at the end of the season.

12 CHAMPION, RELEGATION

12 A club shall not be allowed to withdraw any of all of its teams from the League after the Annual General Meeting each year. Any club infringing this rule shall also be liable to a fine (See fines & fees in the league handbook).

The constitution for the coming season having been decided at a Special General Meeting held for the purpose, or at the Annual General Meeting, the Board 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.

A club playing record shall include all points and goals obtained by or recorded against that club.

15 WITHDRAWAL OF CLUBS

Clubs in membership **not** having notified the League General Secretary of their intention to withdraw shall be assumed to be continuing in membership for the following season.

A club having given written notice of its intention to withdraw, may withdraw that notice but only with the approval of the competition which may not be given.

A club withdrawing any or all of its teams from the League after the Annual General Meeting each year will be in default of this rule and shall also be liable for its share of any monies due under these Rules.

This rule applies to the withdrawal of any team, first, reserve, development, veteran or youth team.

16 PROTESTS, APPEALS

16.1 All questions of eligibility, qualifications of players, or interpretations of the rules shall be referred to the Board.

16.2 No objection or protest shall be withdrawn except by permission of the Board.

17 MISCONDUCT OF CLUBS, OFFICERS, PLAYERS

Misconduct referred to is not in respect of misconduct on the field of play.

18 TROPHY

If the competition be discontinued for any cause, the Cup or Trophy shall be returned to the donor if the conditions attached to it so provide, held in trust, or otherwise dealt with as the Board may decide.

Trophies shall be returned by 31st March of the following year to the League General Secretary, or other nominated officer, suitably engraved and cleaned.

Any box or container in which the trophy is supplied shall also be the subject of this rule and its loss or damage shall also be subject to a fine.

38 HOSPITALITY CRITERIA

See "Suggested Hospitality Criteria for Home Clubs" in this guide.

FINES PROCEDURE

The Combined Counties League will issue fine notices, where possible, within 5 days of the incident being reported. The fine will be issued by email to the Club Secretary and copied to the League General Secretary and League Treasurer.

A Club has 28 days, from the date of issue of the Fines Notice, to pay the fine.

The payment is to be made through a Bank Transfer using the details provided in the fine notification. **The Fines Secretary must be also be advised when the payment is made**, in order to maintain an up to date fines record and to avoid unnecessary follow-ups.

In the event of a fine not being paid, 21 days after being issued, a further notice will be sent to the Club Chairman, copied to the Club Secretary, League General Secretary & League Treasurer.

Should the fine still remain unpaid after a further 7 days, a further fine will be imposed under Rule 4.5. Should that fine, plus the original fine, remain unpaid after a further 14 days, the Club will be liable to suspension under Rule 4.6.

Any query about a fine should be addressed to the League Officer raising the fine (not the Fines Secretary). In the event that the offence was reported by the referee, the query must be addressed to the Referees' Secretary, not the referee. Should the officer concerned decline to rescind the fine, Clubs may protest to the League under Rule 16. Note: the 14 day protest period starts from the date of issue of the original fine. Clubs should bear this in mind, especially if a referees' report is queried, as the Referees' Secretary needs time to contact the match official.

FINES DISCIPLINE

Any club incurring 4 fines in any period of 3 months, will be called to appear before the Disciplinary Sub-Committee. Should the same Club similarly transgress again in the same season, the Club will again be called before the League Management Committee, and a fine may be imposed under Rule 4.8.

Any club incurring 3 or more fines under rule 4.5 in a season, will be called before the League Management Committee, and a fine may be imposed under Rule 4.8.

REPORTING OF RESULTS USING TEXTING TO FULL TIME

The Combined Counties League uses The FA FULL-TIME SMS result reporting system for all competition matches. This system makes the reporting of results easier for clubs whilst also providing a more rapid results service where clubs are able to access results of league & cup matches soon after they have been completed.

Results may be reported by text message immediately after a match and will then be available to view from the internet using a PC or mobile phone/device.

For each team, two mobile numbers can be registered. This allows two people to report the result for any match. Only one text is required to successfully make the report. These people must be created as "Team Administrators" and then assigned by the league to receive SMS messages.

Your Club Secretary will have to register these people using WGS as Team Officials and assign them roles that are available i.e. "Team Secretary", "Team Manager", "Team Assistant Manager" or "Team Coach". These roles appear as Team Administrators in Full Time. You then need to inform the league which of these should be assigned to receive and respond to SMS messages.

It is the league who will configure the SMS system with the correct two "Team Administrators" to be part of this service.

Please make sure you send any update or change of these two people & numbers at least 48 hours before games kick off to give the WGS & the league time to process them.

To report the result of a league or league cup match using the SMS message system the following procedure should be used:

During each game, the FA system will send an SMS Text Message to each registered mobile number, reminding you to send in the result of the game. After the game, both home and away clubs should report the score by replying to this message giving the score for the game, home team first, away team second, and separated by a hyphen.

For example: -

The system will send a text message similar to the following:-

FA Full-Time Results: HOME v AWAY, Sat 01 Sep 15:00. Reply H-A score XXXX

To report a 2-1 win to the home side you would simply reply: 2-1

It is important to note you should not add other information or the Full-Time system will ignore your result. The text must be sent from one of the registered mobiles as "Full-Time" identifies you by the mobile number it has been given.

Where you are using the same mobile phone number to report the result to Full Time for other teams in your club you will have to include the team "Short Code" in the message. This is up to 4 characters in length and will be included in the message sent to you by Full Time.

e.g Reply H-A score and code XXXX

Where XXXX is the short team code for your team, this is only included when required.
To report a 2-1 win to the home side you would simply reply: 2-1 XXXX

We also require that you report the attendance at your match. We ask that the home team report the attendance using the SMS reporting system. Simply add your attendance to the end of your result message.

2-1 ATT 150 (or 2-1 XXXX ATT 150)

This will report an attendance of 150 at your match.

Full-Time allows you to report postponements [P-P] and abandonment's [A-A]. Only send these characters when reporting such a result.

If the match is in a cup competition, the full-time result, at the conclusion of 90 minutes, must be reported in accordance with Rule 8.20, this can be done either by text or by telephoning the league results service. Where extra-time is played the final result must also be reported. This should be done using the text service to ensure that the Full-Time system records the final result.

The result should be reported at the conclusion of extra time using the normal format followed by AET & PENS if required: e.g. 2-2 3-3 AET 3-1 PENS

You are required to potentially send back up to three pieces of information in the same SMS text message:-

1. Score – The score after normal time in the usual way
2. Extra Time score – the score line after extra time, followed by AET (it is essential that AET is included, to identify that the scores beforehand applies to extra time)
3. Penalty score – the score after penalties, followed by PEN (it is essential that PEN is included, to identify that the scores beforehand applies to penalties)

If the normal time score is not level, then any extra time and penalty score will be ignored.

4. Attendance – the home side only includes this using the ATT nnn at the end of the message.

If you make a mistake with a text message, don't worry. The system will take the last message that you send so just send a correct message and this will over-ride any incorrect message previously sent.

Hints and Tips

- 1 Make sure you give the home score first, away score second.
- 2 Tell the league if you change your mobile number or have this changed on MOAS
- 3 Tell the league if a fixture is incorrect on Full-Time (or the league website) before the game is played.
- 4 If you make a mistake, just send another message with the correct result
- 5 Do not include any team names or dates in the text message
- 6 Keep the message to the format described above. Do not send additional information as it will be ignored by the system and may cause the result to be misunderstood and wrongly reported.

This procedure only applies to league & cup matches in the Combined Counties League and outside competitions which have been setup in Full Time. The results of any other

matches should be phoned or texted to the League Results Secretary (details in the handbook).

If you spot that a result is shown incorrectly on FULL-TIME or on the league website please inform the league. This means that the last result reported by SMS messaging was incorrect. The club at fault may pick up a fine.

All Clubs must report their results using the SMS text messaging system. If, for any reason, a text message cannot be sent the result should be reported by telephone or texted to the League Results Secretary.

GUIDE TO MARKING OF REFEREES

Please Note: This guide should only be used by teams in Division Two, U23, U18 Divisions & Women's Cup Competition. Step 5 & 6 teams will use MOAS for marking of referees.

The mark awarded by a club must be based on the referee's overall performance, It is most important that the mark is awarded fairly and not based upon isolated incidents or previous games. The referee's performance should be determined by the table below which should act as a guide for the overall mark which should fall within the mark range for each standard of performance.

Mark	Comment
91-100	The referee was extremely accurate in decision making and very successfully controlled the game using management and communication skills to create an environment of fair play, adding real value to the game.
81-90	The referee was very accurate in decision making and successfully controlled the game using management and communication skills to create an environment of fair play.
71-80	The referee was accurate in decision making and controlled the game well communicating with the players, making a positive contribution towards fair play.
61-70	The referee was reasonably accurate in decision making, controlled the game quite well and communicated with the players, establishing a reasonable degree of fair play.
51-60	The referee had some shortcomings in the level of accuracy in decision making and control with only limited success in communicating with the players resulting in variable fair play.
50 and below	The referee had significant shortcomings in the level of accuracy of decision making and control with poor communication with the players which resulted in low levels of fair play.

Notes:

Using a scale of up to 100 allows greater flexibility for clubs to distinguish between different refereeing performances more accurately.

A mark within each mark range can be given to reflect the referee's performance e.g. a mark of 79 indicates a somewhat better performance than a mark of 71.

A mark between 71 and 80 represents the standard of refereeing expected.

When a mark of 60 or less is awarded, an explanation must be provided to the League or Competition by completing the appropriate box on the marking form. It must include comments which could help improve the referee's future performances. Even where a referee has significant shortcomings there will have been some positive aspects which should be given credit; extremely low marks (below 20) should be very rare.

The marking of Assistant Referees will be the responsibility of the Referee.

Results Line

07970 796624

Useful League Contacts

Competition Secretary & Fixtures Secretary:

CHRIS CONLON

Telephone: 01323 505466

Mobile: 07870 193749

Referees' Secretary:

MARTIN ETHERIDGE

Telephone: 01932 269684

Mobile: 07713 515899

Deputy Referees' Secretary

(Premier Divisions, Division One & Division Two Referee Appointments):

GEOFF KNOCK

Mobile: 07551 794727

Registrations Secretary:

STUART COLLINS

Telephone: 020 3802 5536

Mobile: 07753 166897

Facsimile: 01784 772441

Assistant Referees' Secretary (Premier Divisions & Division One):

NIGEL HICKES

Telephone: 0208 582 2799

Mobile: 07768 818427

Results Secretary:

ROGER KING

Telephone: 01483 578675

Mobile: 07512 489793

Match Officials' Appointments (U18s):

PATRICK NIXON

Mobile: 07714 445750

Match Officials Post Match Administrator:

ROD CHATFIELD

Telephone: 01271 863927

Hon. Youth Secretary:

FRANK JAMES

Work Telephone: 0208 538 5480

Mobile: 07958 718930

Hon. Development & Youth Fixtures Secretary:

ANTONY COX

Mobile: 07961 073024

Match Officials' Appointments (U18) & Match Official Development:

MARTIN ETHERIDGE

Telephone: 01932 269684

Mobile: 07713 515899