

LEAGUE RULES - 2008/2009

NOMENCLATURE AND CONSTITUTION

1.(A) The Competition shall be designated the Midland Women's Combination League, (hereinafter known as The MidComb), and shall consist of 12 Clubs all of whom shall be Full Member Clubs.

All such Member Clubs must be affiliated to an affiliated County Football Association and their names and particulars shall be returned annually by the appointed date on the Form "D" to the Football Association. The area covered by the Competition Membership shall be the Midlands Region.

The MidComb shall apply annually for sanction to the Football Association in respect of the Main division, which will comprise the constituent teams of Full Member Clubs; and a Reserve division, which may include guest or associate teams.

Member Clubs shall not enter any of their teams playing in the Competition in any other Competitions (with the exception of F.A. and County F.A. Competitions) except with the written consent of the Management Committee of the Competition.

ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION, DEPOSIT

2.(A) Applications by Clubs for admission to this Competition or the entry of an additional team(s) must be made in writing to the Secretary on the League Application Form and must be accompanied by an Entry Fee of £10.00 per team, which shall be returned in the event of non-election. Teams relegated from the Northern and Southern Division of the National Premier League and promoted from the Premier Divisions of the East and West Midland Regional Leagues are to pay the full amount. The annual fee for Reserve teams shall be half that applicable to teams in the main division, with the exception of guest reserve teams whose parent club do not compete in the main division.

2. (B) The Annual Subscription shall be £100.00 for main division clubs and £50.00 for reserve teams (if part of a main division club) The Annual Subscription for guest teams whose parent club do not compete in the main division shall be £100.00 ALL Annual Subscriptions are payable on or before the 31st July.

2. (C) Clubs must advise annually to the Secretary in writing by 15th July of its County Football Association affiliation number for the forthcoming Season, failing which they shall be fined £10.00. Clubs must advise the Secretary in writing, or on the prescribed form, of details of its Headquarters, Officers and any other information required by the Competition.

OFFICERS

3. The Officers of the Competition shall be the Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Registration Secretary, Referees Secretary, Fixtures and Competitions Secretary to be elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. (N.B. Auditors are not Officers).

MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION

4.(A) The Competition shall be governed in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Football Association by a Management Committee comprised of the Officers of the League. All participants shall abide by The Football Association Regulations for Safeguarding Children as determined by The Association from time to time.

4.(B) Retiring Officers shall be eligible to become candidates for re-election without nomination. All other candidates for election as Officers or Members of the Management Committee shall be nominated to the Secretary in writing, signed by the Secretaries of two Member Clubs, not later than 28 days prior to the AGM in each year. Names of the candidates for election shall be circulated with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. In the event of there being no nomination in accordance with the foregoing for any office, nominations may be received at the Annual General Meeting

4. (C) The Management Committee shall meet as often as is necessary to deal with business as it arises. On receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds of the Members of the Management Committee the Secretary shall convene a meeting of the Committee.

4. (D) Except where otherwise mentioned all communications shall be addressed to the Secretary who shall conduct the correspondence of the Competition and keep a record of its proceedings.

4. (E) All communications received from Clubs must be conducted through their nominated Officers.

POWERS OF MANAGEMENT

- 5.(A) The Management Committee may appoint such other sub-committees as they may consider necessary and may delegate such of their powers as they deem necessary to such committees. The decisions of all such committees shall be reported to the Management Committee for ratification.
5. (B) Subject to the permission of the Football Association having been obtained the Management Committee may order a match or matches to be played each season, the proceeds to be devoted to the funds of the Competition and, if necessary, may call upon each Club (including any Club which may have withdrawn during the season) to contribute equally such sums as may be necessary to meet any deficiency at the end of the season. (See Rule 6(e)).
5. (C) Each Member of the Management Committee shall have the right to attend and vote at all Management Committee Meetings and have one vote thereat, but no Member shall be allowed to vote on any matters directly appertaining to such Member or to the Club so represented. (This shall apply to the procedure of any sub-committee). In the event of the voting being equal on any matter, the Chairman shall have a second or casting vote.
5. (D) The Management Committee shall have powers to apply, act upon and enforce the Rules of the Competition and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the Competition, including any not provided for in the Rules. Except where these Rules provide for the imposition of a set penalty any Club, Official or Player alleged to be in breach of a Competition Rule must be formally charged in writing and given the opportunity to present their case before the Management Committee. All breaches of the Laws of Association Football, Rules and Regulations of The Football Association shall be dealt with in accordance with FA Rules.
5. (E) All decisions of the Management Committee shall be binding subject to the right of appeal to the Board of Appeal in accordance with Rule 16. Decisions of the Management Committee must be notified in writing to those concerned within seven days.
5. (F) Four Members of the Management Committee shall constitute a Quorum for the transaction of business of the Management Committee and two Members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business by any sub-committee of the Competition.
5. (G) The Management Committee, as it may deem necessary, shall have power to fill in an acting capacity, any vacancies that may occur amongst their number.
5. (H) A Club having failed to comply with an order or instruction of the Management Committee, or failing to satisfactorily attend to the business and/or the correspondence of the Competition shall be liable to be fined or otherwise penalised at the discretion of the Management Committee.
5. (I) All fines and charges shall be paid within 14 days of the date of posting of the written notification. Clubs, Officials or individuals committing a breach of this Rule will incur such penalties as the Management Committee may impose.
5. (J) A member of the Management Committee appointed by the Competition to attend a meeting or match may have any expenses incurred refunded by the Competition.
5. (K) The Management Committee shall have the power to fill any vacancy that may occur in the membership of the Competition between the Annual General or Special General Meeting called to decide the constitution and the commencement of the Competition season.
5. (L) - No participant under the age of 18 will be liable to pay a fine.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

6(A) The Annual General Meeting shall be held not later than 30 June in each year. At this meeting the following business shall be transacted provided that at least ten members are present and entitled to vote:-

- (i) To receive and confirm the Minutes of the preceding Annual General Meeting.
- (ii) To consider any business arising there from.
- (iii) To receive and adopt the Annual Report, Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts.
- (iv) Election of Clubs to fill vacancies (as recommended by the Management Committee).
- (v) Constitution of the Competition for ensuing season.

- (vi) Election of Officers and Management Committee.
 - (vii) Appointment of Auditors.
 - (viii) Alteration of Rules, if any (of which notice has been given).
 - (ix) Fix the date for the commencement and conclusion of playing season.
 - (x) Other business of which due notice shall have been given and accepted as being relevant to an Annual General Meeting.
6. (B) A copy of the duly audited Balance Sheet, Statement of Accounts and Agenda shall be forwarded to each Club at least fourteen days prior to the meeting, and to the Football Association.
 6. (C) A signed copy of the duly audited Balance Sheet and Statement of Accounts shall be sent to the Football Association within fourteen days of its adoption by the Annual General Meeting.
 6. (D) Each Full Member Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to an Annual General Meeting. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only. Not less than twenty-one days' notice shall be given of any Meeting.
 6. (E) Clubs who have withdrawn their Membership of the Competition during the season being concluded or who are not continuing Membership shall be entitled to attend but shall vote only on matters relating to the season being concluded.
 6. (F) All voting shall be conducted by a show of voting cards unless a ballot be demanded by at least one third of the delegates qualified to vote or the Chairman so decides.
 6. (G) Voting by proxy is not allowed.
 6. (H) Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at the Annual General Meeting without satisfactory reason being given shall be fined **£50.00**.
 6. (I) Officers and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at an Annual General Meeting.

AGREEMENT TO BE SIGNED

7. The Chairman and the Secretary of each Club shall complete and sign the following agreement which shall be deposited with the Competition together with the Application for Membership for the coming season, or upon indicating that the Club intends to compete.

"We, A, _____ of _____ (Chairman) and
 B _____ of _____ (Secretary) of

The _____ Football Club have been provided with a copy of the Rules and Regulations of the MidComb League and do hereby agree for and on behalf of the said Club to, if elected or accepted into Membership, to conform to those Rules and Regulations and to accept, abide by and implement the decisions of the Management Committee of the Competition, subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Rule 16.

Any alteration of the Chairman and /or Secretary on the above Agreement must be notified to the County Football Association(s) to which the Club is affiliated and to the Secretary of the MidComb League.

(Note: The spaces above are intended for the inclusion of the signatures and addresses of officers and members).

QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS

- 8.(A) Contract players, as defined in Football Association Rules, are permitted in this Competition.
8. (B) (i) - A registered playing member of a Club is one who, being in all other respects eligible, has:-
 Signed a fully and correctly completed Competition registration form in ink, countersigned by an Officer of the Club, and who has been registered with the Registrations Secretary 48 hours prior to playing. Prior to the start of each season the Registration Secretary will produce a list of player registrations to each club. All clubs must ensure that they obtain confirmation from the Registration Secretary that the player is eligible to play.

8. (C) A player having taken part in matches for any Club affiliated to any County Football Association shall not be allowed to join, be transferred to, or sign for a Club in the Competition without first proving to the officials of the intended Club that the player has discharged all reasonable financial liabilities to the previous Club or Clubs, and a Club official may not accept such player's signature without first ascertaining whether such claims have been discharged to the satisfaction of the Club, or Clubs, for which the player last played.

8. (D) Registration forms shall be obtained from the Registrations Secretary (cost of registration is included in the annual subscription)

8. (E) The Management Committee shall decide all registration disputes.

In the event of a player signing a registration form or having a registration submitted for more than one Club priority of registration shall decide for which Club the player shall be registered. The Registrations Secretary shall notify the Club last applying to register the player of the fact of the previous registration.

8. (F) It shall be deemed misconduct for a player to:-

(i) Play for more than one Club in the Competition in the same season without first being transferred.

(ii) Having signed for one Club in the Competition, sign for another Club in the Competition in that season except for the purpose of a transfer.

(iii) Submit a signed registration form for registration that the player had wilfully neglected to accurately or fully complete.

8. (G)(i) The Management Committee shall have power to accept the registration of any player. The Management Committee shall have power to refuse, cancel or suspend the registration of any player or may fine any player except those under 18 years of age at their discretion proved guilty of registration irregularities. (Subject to Rule 16).

8. (ii) The Management Committee shall have power to refuse or cancel the registration of any player charged and found guilty of undesirable conduct. (Subject to Rule 16). Undesirable conduct shall mean an incident of repeated conduct which may deter a participant from being involved in the Competition.

(Note: Action under Clause (ii) shall not be taken against a player for misconduct on the field of play until the matter has been dealt with by the appropriate Association, and then only in cases of the player bringing the Competition into disrepute.)

8. (H) Subject to The Football Association Rules dealing with players without a written contract when a player desires a transfer, the Club the player wishes to transfer to shall submit a transfer form to the Registrations Secretary accompanied by a fee of **£10.00**. Such transfer shall be referred by the Registrations Secretary to the Club for which the player is registered on the appropriate form. Should this Club object to the transfer it should state its objections in writing to the Registrations Secretary and to the player concerned within seven days of receipt of the transfer form. Upon receipt of the Club's consent, or upon its failure to give written objection within seven days, the Registrations Secretary may, on behalf of the Management Committee, transfer the player who shall be deemed eligible to play for the new Club from such date.

In the event of an objection to a transfer the matter shall be referred to the Management Committee for a decision.

8. (I) A player may not be transferred to, or registered with, another Club in the Competition after the 31st March except by special permission of the Management Committee. A player may not be registered in the Competition after the 31st March except by special permission of the Management Committee.

A player may not be transferred to, or registered with, another Club in the Competition after the last Thursday in February except by special permission of the Management Committee.

8. (J) A Club shall keep a list of the players it registers and a record of the games in which they have played, and shall produce such records upon demand by the Management Committee.

8. (K) A register containing the names of all players registered for each Club, with the date of registration, shall be kept by the Registrations Secretary and shall be open to the inspection of any duly appointed Member Club representative at all Management Committee meetings or at other times mutually arranged. Registration is valid for one season only.

8. (L) A player shall not be eligible to play for a team in any special championship, promotion or relegation deciding match (as specified in Rule 12(A)) unless the player has played five games for that team in this Competition in the current season.

8. (M)(i) Any team playing an unregistered or otherwise ineligible player or players shall have the points gained in the match deducted from its total and may be fined up to **£50.00** and / or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- (ii) In addition the team may have up to a maximum of three points deducted from its total at the discretion of the Management Committee and may be dealt with in any further manner which is thought to be fit.
- (iii) The Management Committee in exceptional circumstances may, at its discretion, award any points deducted from a Club under this Rule to the opponents in the match in question, subject to the match not being ordered to be replayed.
- (The following Clause applies to Competitions involving players in full-time secondary education):-
- (N)(i) Priority must be given at all times to school and school organisations activities.
- (ii) A player must be sixteen (16) years of age or over on the day of any fixture in which they compete.

(Note: For players under the age of 18 the provisions contained in Football Association Rules will apply.)

CLUB COLOURS. CLUB NAME

9.(A) Every Club must register the colour of its shirts and shorts with the Secretary by 15th July who shall decide as to their suitability.

Goalkeepers must wear colours which distinguish them from other players and the referee.

No player, including the goalkeeper, shall be permitted to wear black or very dark shirts.

Any team not being able to play in its normal colours as registered with the Competition shall notify the colours in which they will play to its opponents at least five days before the match.

If, in the opinion of the referee, two Clubs have the same or similar colours, the *away* team shall make the change. Any team not having a change of colours or delaying the kick-off by not having a change shall be fined **£20.00**

The Secretary of the Competition may request shirts to be submitted if complaints are received as to lack of distinguishing colours, and the Management Committee may refuse to permit any shirts or shorts as they think fit. Shirts must be numbered and team captains must wear armbands. Failure to do so will incur a fine of £10.00

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

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

10.(A) The Annual General Meeting shall determine the commencing and concluding dates for the ensuing season which shall be in accordance with Football Association Rules. No Club shall be compelled to play after the concluding date. Clubs will be advised of their League and League Cup Competition fixtures by the Fixtures Secretary.

Fixtures are deemed to be accepted unless objections are received by the Fixtures Secretary within fourteen days of their issue.

10. (B) All matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of Association Football as determined by the International Football Association Board.

Clubs must take all reasonable precautions to keep their grounds in a playable condition. All matches shall be played on pitches deemed suitable by the Management Committee. If through any fault of the home team a match has to be replayed, the Management Committee shall have power to order the venue to be changed.

The Management Committee shall have power to decide whether a pitch and/or facilities are suitable for matches in the Competition and to order the Club concerned to play its fixtures on another ground.

All matches shall have a duration of 90 minutes unless a shorter time (not less than 70 minutes) is mutually arranged by the two captains in consultation with the referee prior to the commencement of the match, and in any event shall be of equal halves.

All matches will kick-off at 2pm **unless in the case of Reserve fixtures both teams and the match official agree, in which case the Fixture Secretary must be informed of the revised kick-off time.** Clubs wishing to kick off at any other time must obtain the written permission of the Management Committee prior to the start of the season. Any Club failing to commence at the appointed time shall / may be fined a sum not exceeding **£25.00** or be otherwise dealt with as the Management Committee may determine.

Referees must order matches to commence at the appointed time and must report all late starts to the Competition.

The home team must provide at least two footballs fit for play and the referee shall make a report to the Competition if the footballs are unsuitable.

- (i) Should the pitch not be enclosed, it must be roped off for all matches **except those played in the Reserve Division. Apart from exceptional circumstances that are agreed by the Fixture Secretary, teams that cannot meet this requirement may be asked to play their home fixture on their opponent's ground.**
- (ii) All grounds will be inspected and approved by the Management Committee, or persons designated by the Management Committee.
- (iii) Each club must make every effort to maintain the pitch in a playable condition. Should the pitch become unsuitable for matches in the League, the Management Committee may order another pitch to be used.
- (iv) New generation rubber infill pitches will be permitted with prior consent of the Midland Women's Combination League Management Committee, provided that the artificial turf meets the FA criteria
- (v) Grounds must be a minimum of 100 metres (110 yards) in length and a minimum of 64 metres (70 yards) in width.
- (vi) Goal nets and corner flag posts must be used.
- (vii) Adequate, separate changing and washing facilities should be provided for each team and shall be provided for the match officials.
- (viii) All grounds must have access to a telephone.
- (ix) Adequate car parking facilities.
- (x) A technical area to be provided in accordance with the laws of the game.
- (xi) Clubs will be required to play midweek fixtures.
- (xii) Clubs are required to have access to grounds with floodlights in situ. This does not have to be the Clubs designated ground.

Please also refer to Appendix B for the new FA Ground Grading requirements that come into force for the commencement of the 07/08 playing season.

10. (C) Except by permission of the Management Committee all matches must be played on the dates originally fixed but priority shall be given to The Football Association and all relevant County Association Cup Competitions. All other matches must be considered secondary. Clubs may mutually agree to bring forward a match with the consent of the Fixtures Secretary.

10. (D) The Secretary of the home Club must give notice in writing of full particulars of the location of, and access to, the ground and time of kick-off to the match officials and the Secretary of the opposing Club at least five clear days prior to the playing of the match, **that is by the Tuesday before a Sunday fixture.** The away Club shall seek and acknowledge receipt of such particulars. Any Club failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to a fine of **£20.00**. Should this information not be received by the opposing club by the Wednesday evening preceding the match they are to inform the League Secretary.

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

(Note: 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 Management Committee, the substance or 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 Management Committee may determine, despite the fact that Rule 8 has not been infringed.)

In the event of a Club playing in any match with less than 10 players they may be fined **£5.00** for each missing player. A minimum of seven players will constitute a team for a Competition match.

10. (F) Home and away matches shall be played. In the event of a **Main Division** team failing to keep its engagement the Management Committee shall inflict a £50 fine, and deduct 3 points from the defaulting Club. The Management Committee may also award the points to the opponents, order the defaulting Club to pay any expenses incurred by the opponents or otherwise deal with them except the award of goals. Notwithstanding the foregoing home and away provision, the Management Committee shall have power to order a match to be played on a neutral ground or on the opponent's ground if they are satisfied that such action is warranted by the circumstances. Other than for exceptional circumstances, or where a ground has been deemed unplayable, matches will not be postponed without the express permission of the Fixtures Secretary.

If a **Reserve Division** team fails to keep its engagement, the Management Committee will inflict punishment as follows:-

First offence - £50.00 fine and 1 point deducted.

Second offence - £50.00 fine and 2 points deducted.

Third offence - £50.00 and 3 points deducted.

The Management Committee may also award the points to the opponents, order the defaulting Club to pay any expenses incurred by the opponents or otherwise deal with them except the award of goals.

Each Club must make every effort to ensure its pitch is in a playable condition. If there is any doubt to the pitch being playable it is the responsibility of the home Club to call a registered referee, or in the case of a private ground, the responsible grounds man, or the ground staff of a local authority, to inspect and decide if the match can take place. On those occasions where a fixture is postponed, immediate notice must be given without delay by the postponing Club to the **Fixtures Secretary**. Failure to do so will result in a fine of £25.00. Notice must also be given to the Referees Appointments Secretary, the Secretary of the opposing Club and the match officials. In the case of an unfit ground, a letter from the grounds man / local authority may be requested by the Management Committee. This applies to both Main and Reserve Division teams.

Any Club failing to comply shall be dealt with by the Management Committee who may inflict any penalty it may deem suitable.

In the event of a match not being played or abandoned owing to causes over which neither Club has control, it shall be played in its entirety on a date to be mutually agreed by the two Clubs and approved by the Management Committee. Failing such agreement and notification to the Fixtures Secretary within seven days the Management Committee shall have power to order the match to be played on a named date or on or before a given date.

Should any club charge for admission to matches, they must notify their opponents at the time of confirming the game, and provide exemption for players and officials from the visiting team.

The Management Committee shall review all abandoned matches and in a case where it is to the advantage of the Competition and does no injustice to either Club, shall be empowered to order the score at the time of the abandonment to stand. In all cases where the Management Committee are satisfied that a match was abandoned owing to the conduct of one team or its Club member(s) they shall be empowered to award the points for the match to the opponents and / or take what other action they may deem necessary. In cases where a match is abandoned owing to the conduct of both teams or their Club members, the Management Committee shall take such action as they consider appropriate. Such action is subject to any disciplinary action taken by the appropriate County Association.

(G) A Club may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of Association Football use 3 substitute players in any match in this Competition who may be selected from 5 players.

Team sheets shall be exchanged with opponents and given to the referee at least 30 minutes before the start of the match. Failure to comply will result in a fine of **£10.00**.

A player who has been selected, appointed or named as a substitute before the start of the match but does not actually play in the game shall not be considered to have been a player in that game within the meaning of Rule 8 of this Competition.

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

10. (I) Refreshments shall be provided for the visiting team and match officials on arrival and at half time. After match hospitality shall be provided for opponents and match officials (if this is not to be at the ground itself, then the venue must be agreed with the Management Committee).

REPORTING RESULTS

11.(A) The Registration Secretary must receive within three working days of the date played the result of each Competition match in the prescribed manner. This must include the forename(s) and surname (in block letters) of the team players, registration numbers, goal-scorers, player of the match, result of the match and also the Referee markings required by Rule 13, and any other information required by the Competition. Failure to do so will incur a fine of **£25.00** and/or the Club being dealt with as the Management Committee decide.

11. (B) The Home Club shall telephone the result of each match to the Results Co-Ordinator or other nominated person within one hour of the conclusion of the match. Failure to do so will incur a fine of **£10.00**

11. (C) The match result notification, correctly completed, shall be signed by a responsible member of the Club. The Management Committee shall have power to take such action as they deem suitable against a Club which submits an incomplete form or incorrect information. Any false entry will incur a fine of **£25.00** or be dealt with as the Management Committee sees fit.

DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP

12 (A) Team rankings within the Competition will be decided by points with three points to be awarded for a win and one point for a drawn match. The teams gaining the highest number of points in their respective Divisions at the conclusion shall be adjudged the winners. Matches must not be played for double points.

In the event that any two or more Clubs are equal in points at the end of the Season, the higher placed Club shall be decided on goal difference.

In each case of goal difference, the goals scored against shall be deducted from the goals scored for and the winner shall be the Club with the largest difference. In the event of the difference being equal, the higher placed Club shall be the Club which has scored more goals.

If two or more Clubs have the same goal difference and have scored the same number of goals and their positions in the League have a bearing on deciding the Champion Club or relegation issues, then the Clubs concerned shall play off a deciding MidComb League Match or Matches on a neutral ground. In all other cases the Clubs concerned will be deemed to have finished in equal positions. The Management Committee shall determine the format, timing and venues of, and all other rules relating to a play off match or matches.

12. (B) Automatic promotion and relegation shall be applied for the first placed and last two placed teams in the Division except as provided for hereunder, subject to the provisions of Rule 1(b).

(i) Should one or more teams withdraw from the Division after the fixtures have commenced an equal number of teams to those withdrawing in that Division shall not be automatically relegated.

(ii) Vacancies occurring after the conclusion of the season may be filled on any of the following ways:

(a) retention of otherwise relegated team(s)

(b) additional promotion of the next ranked team(s) from the Division below

12. (C) In the event of a team not completing all of its fixtures for the season all points obtained by or recorded against such defaulting team shall be expunged from the Competition table.

12. (D) The Champion Club, providing it meets the appropriate grading criteria, will be eligible to make application to the Northern Division of the National Premier League Competition at their Annual General Meeting.

Should the Champion Club not wish for promotion or, alternatively, not have the necessary grading criteria, then the second or third place Club will be eligible under the same conditions.

At the end of each season and depending on the geographical location of Clubs relegated from the Northern Division of the National Premier League or being promoted from the East or West Midland Regional League Competitions, it may be necessary for the Competition either (a) to accept a Club from

the Northern Women's Combination League Competition, or (b) have a Club transferred to the same Competition.

The bottom two Clubs in the Midland Women's Combination League Competition will be relegated. Each relegated Club will be allocated either to the West Midland Regional League Competition or to the East Midland Regional League Competition. If a Club is eligible or wishes promotion, only the bottom Club in the Midland Women's Combination League Competition will be relegated.

If no Clubs are eligible, or wish for promotion, no Clubs will be relegated from the Midland Women's Combination League Competition.

In the event of a Midland Women's Combination League Competition Club not being placed in the bottom two Clubs at the end of the season, wishing to resign from the Competition at the end of the season, or having been excluded under Rule 17 only one Club will be relegated at the end of the season.

In the event of a Midland Women's Combination League Competition Club opting to be relegated or being relegated under Rule 17 such club or Clubs will replace the Club or Clubs otherwise due for relegation, recommended as most appropriate by the Joint Liaison Committee. Clubs will be promoted to the Midland Women's Combination League Competition from the West Midland Regional League Competition, and the East Midland Regional League Competition providing that each Club is either the Champion Club or Runner-up or third place Club and has the necessary grading criteria.

In the event of there being no eligible Club wishing promotion or not having the necessary grading criteria from either the West or East Midland Regional League Competitions, the number of Clubs to be relegated from the Midland Women's Combination League Competition will be adjusted accordingly.

If only two Clubs are eligible or wish for promotion, the bottom two Clubs in the Midland Women's Combination League Competition will be relegated. If only one

REFEREES

13.(A) Registered Referees and Assistant Referees will be appointed by the Referees Secretary to all **1st team** matches played in the Midland Women's Combination League, **only referees shall be appointed for Reserve team matches**. Should this not be possible Referees and Assistant Referees shall be appointed in a manner approved by the Management Committee and by the sanctioning Association(s).

13. (B) In the event of the non-appearance of the appointed Referee the appointed senior Assistant Referee shall take charge and a substitute Assistant Referee appointed by the competing Teams. In cases where there are no officially appointed Assistant Referees, the Clubs shall agree upon a Referee. A Referee thus agreed upon shall, for that game, have the full powers, status and authority of a registered Referee.

13. (C) Where Assistant Referees are not appointed each Team shall provide a Club Assistant Referee. Failure to do so will result in a fine of **£10.00** being imposed on the defaulting team.

13. (D) The appointed Referee shall have power to decide as to the fitness of the ground in all matches and the decision shall be final subject to either in the case of a ground of a Local Authority or the owners of a ground, the Representative of that body is the sole arbiter and whose decision must be accepted unless the ground is declared fit for play.

13. (E) Match Officials appointed under this Rule shall be entitled to charge standard class public transport expenses or private car expenses of 25 pence per mile to a maximum of £15.00 and any other permitted expenses actually incurred together with the following match fees:-

Referee £25.00, Registered Referees appointed by the Management Committee as Assistant Referees £18.00 subject to any limits laid down by the sanctioning Association(s).

The Home Club shall pay the Officials their fees and expenses immediately after the match.

13. (F) In the event of a match not being played because of circumstances over which the Clubs have no control, the Match Officials, if present, shall be entitled to half fee plus travel expenses only. Where a match is not played owing to one Club being in default, that Club shall be ordered to pay the Officials, if they attend the ground, their full fee and expenses.

13. (G) A Referee not keeping his engagement, and failing to give a satisfactory explanation as to his non-appearance, may have his name removed from the list of Referees and the fact reported to the County Association with which he is registered.

13. (H) Each Club shall, in a manner prescribed from time to time by The Football Association, award marks to the Referee for each match and the name of the Referee and the marks awarded shall be submitted to the Competition on the prescribed form provided. Clubs failing to comply with this Rule shall be liable to be fined **£10.00** and dealt with as the Management Committee shall determine.

The Competition shall keep a record of the markings and, on the Form provided by the prescribed date each season, shall submit a summary to The County Football Association,

13. (J) The Referee shall complete the Referee's Section of the Match Report Form supplied by the home team, giving the result of the match, the number of players in each team and the time of kick-off.

13. (K) Referees and Assistant Referees shall be supplied, each Season, with a copy of the Competition Rules free of charge. Home clubs must confirm with the Referee and Assistant Referees venue, kick off times and ground directions five days before a match (that is by the Tuesday before a Sunday fixture). Failure to do so will result in a fine of **£10.00**.

CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP OR WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB

14.(A) After 31st December in the current Season a Club intending, or having a provisional intention, to withdraw a team from the Competition on completion of its fixtures and fulfilment of all other obligations to the Competition must notify the Secretary in writing by 31st March each Season or be liable to a fine not exceeding **£25.00**. All Clubs wishing to remain in membership of the Competition for the following Season must confirm their intention to do so, in writing, to the Secretary by 7th May for the following season.

14. (B) A Club shall not be allowed to withdraw any or all of its teams from the Competition after the Annual General Meeting / arrangement of fixtures for the following Season. Any Club infringing this Rule shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £125.00 per team and shall also be liable for its share of any call, which may be made under Rule 5(B).

14. (C)The Membership for the coming season having been decided at the Annual General Meeting held no later than 30th June the Competition shall have the right, irrespective of other provisions in this Rule, to refuse to permit a Club to withdraw its team(s) in order to join another Competition and may hold the Club to its engagements.

14. (D) In the event of a Member Club which is an un-incorporated association withdrawing and/or disbanding it shall be immediately liable to discharge all its financial and other obligations to the Competition. In the event that any such obligation remains undischarged after a period of twenty-one (21) days then such obligation shall be met by the then current Club Members, excluding those under the statutory school leaving age. Until a Member's pro rata obligation is discharged in full the Member shall not be allowed to participate in the Competition, which may apply to the Club's Parent County Association for a suspension order.

PROTESTS AND APPEALS

15.(A)(i) All questions of eligibility, qualifications of players or interpretations of the Rules shall be referred to the Management Committee.

(ii) Objections relevant to the dimensions of the pitch, goals, flag posts or other facilities of the venue will not be entertained by the Management Committee unless a protest is lodged with the Referee before the commencement of the match. Any Club lodging such protest and not proceeding with it shall be deemed guilty of a breach of this Rule and shall be dealt with by the Management Committee.

15. (B) Except in cases where the Management Committee decide that there are special circumstances, protests and complaints (which must contain full particulars of the grounds upon which they are founded) must be lodged in duplicate with the Secretary within seven days (excluding Sundays) of the match or occurrence to which they refer. A protest or complaint shall not be withdrawn except by permission of the Management Committee. A Member of the Management Committee who is a member of any Club involved shall not be present (except as a witness or representative of his Club) when such protest or complaint is being determined.

15. (C) Any dispute occurring between Clubs in the Competition shall be referred for determination by the Management Committee whose decision shall be binding upon all parties subject to Rule 16.

15. (D) No protest of whatever kind shall be considered by the Management Committee unless the complaining Club shall have deposited with the Secretary a sum of £25.00. This may be forfeited in whole or in part in the event of the complaining or protesting Club losing its case. The Competition shall have power to order the defaulting Club or the Club making a losing or frivolous protest or complaint to pay the expenses of the enquiry or to order that the costs to be shared by the parties.

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

BOARD OF APPEAL

16. Within 14 days of the posting of written notification of any decision of the Management Committee or the Competition a Club, Official or Player against whom action is taken may appeal against such decision by lodging particulars in duplicate with the Secretary of the Football Association, including a fee of £50.00 for adjudication of a Board of Appeal. The grounds of appeal shall be in accordance with FA Rules. The Board of Appeal may order the appeal fee to be forfeited and shall decide by whom the costs of the appeal shall be borne. The decision of the Board of Appeal is final and binding on all parties concerned. Procedures to be followed are attached at Appendix A to these Rules.

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

17(A) At the Annual General Meeting, or Special General Meeting called for the purpose, Notice of Motion having been duly circulated on the Agenda, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude any Club or Team from further membership upon a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot.

17. (B) At the Annual General Meeting, or at a Special General Meeting called for the purpose, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 19, the accredited delegates present shall have the power to exclude from further participation in the Competition any Club whose conduct has, in their opinion, been undesirable upon a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast. Voting on this point shall be conducted by ballot. A Club whose conduct is the subject of the vote being taken shall be excluded from voting.

17. (C) Any official or member of a Club proved guilty of either misconduct, other than field offences, or of inducing or attempting to induce a player or players of another Club in the Competition to join them shall be liable to expulsion or such penalty as a General Meeting or Management Committee may decide, and their Club shall also be liable to expulsion in accordance with the provisions of Clauses (A) and (B) of this Rule.

17. (D) Any Club or Team failing to complete ALL of its fixtures in any season shall (unless the conditions are beyond their control, or the accredited delegates present at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting decide otherwise by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast) be debarred from membership the following season,

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

18.(A) A Competition Cup or Trophy shall be vested in the Association sanctioning the Competition as Trustees. If a Competition were discontinued for any cause the Cup or Trophy shall be returned to the Donor, if the conditions attached to it so provide, or otherwise dealt with as the Association may decide. At the close of each Competition awards may / shall be made to the winners and runners-up if the funds of the Competition permit.

The following agreement shall be signed on behalf of the winners of the Cup or Trophy..-

"We A _____ and B _____,
the Chairman and Secretary of _____ FC, members of and representing
the Club, having been declared winners
of _____ Cup or Trophy, and it having been delivered to us by the Competition, do
hereby on behalf of the Club jointly and severally agree to return the Cup or Trophy to the Competition

Secretary on or before 1st April. If the Cup or Trophy is lost or damaged whilst under our care we agree to refund to the Competition the amount of its current value or the cost of its thorough repair.

SPECIAL GENERAL MEETINGS

19. Upon receiving a requisition signed by two-thirds of the Clubs in membership the Secretary shall call a Special General Meeting.

The Management Committee may call a Special General Meeting at any time. At least fourteen days notice shall be given of either meeting under this Rule, together with an agenda of the business to be transacted at such meeting. Each Full Member Club shall be empowered to send two delegates to all Special General Meetings. Each Club shall be entitled to one vote only. Not less than fourteen days' notice shall be given of any Meeting.

Associate Member Clubs may be present at all Special General Meetings but have no voting powers.

Any continuing Member Club failing to be represented at a Special General Meeting without satisfactory reason being given shall/may be fined £50.00. Officers and Management Committee members shall be entitled to attend and vote at all Special General Meetings.

ALTERATION TO RULES

20. Alterations shall be made to these Rules only at the Annual General Meeting or at a Special General Meeting specially convened for the purpose called in accordance with Rule 19. Any alteration made during the playing season to the Rule relating to the qualification of players shall not take effect until the following season.

Notice of proposed alterations to be considered at the Annual General Meeting shall be submitted to the Secretary thirty-five days prior to the Annual General Meeting in each year. The proposals, together with any proposals by the Management Committee, shall be circulated to the Clubs twenty-eight days prior to the Annual General Meeting and any amendments thereto shall be submitted to the Secretary twenty-one days prior to the Annual General Meeting. The proposals and proposed amendments thereto shall be circulated to Clubs with the notice of the Annual General Meeting. A proposal to change a Rule if a majority of those present and entitled to vote are in favour.

A copy of the proposed alterations to Rules to be considered at the Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting shall be submitted to the Football Association twenty-eight days prior to the date of the meeting.

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

RULES BINDING ON CLUBS

21. Each Member Club shall be deemed to have given its assent to the foregoing Rules and agreed to abide by the decisions of the Management Committee subject to Rule 16. Each Member Club must abide by any issued Football Association Code of Conduct, League Code of Conduct or Child Protection Policy.

Finance

22. (A) The Management Committee shall determine with which Bank or other Financial Institution the Funds of the Competition shall be lodged.

22. (B) All expenditure in excess of £250-00 shall be approved by the Management Committee; cheques shall be signed by at least 2 Officers nominated by the Management Committee.

22. (C) The financial year of the Competition will end on the 30th April.

22. (D) The books, or a certified Balance Sheet, of a Competition shall be prepared and shall be Audited annually by some suitable person(s) who shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting.

League Cup Competition

The Midland Women's Combination League have the option to run a Main League and Reserve League Cup Competition.

Rules of the League Cup Competition

1. The Cup shall be called the Midland Women's Combination League Cup.
2. The Cup is the property of the Midland Women's Combination League.

When the winning club shall have been ascertained, the League shall deliver the Cup to such Club, which shall be responsible for its return to the League on or before the first day in March in the ensuing year in good order and condition.

Should the Cup be lost, destroyed or damaged by fire or any other cause whilst under the care of custody of the Club, the latter shall refund to the League the amount of its current insured value or the cost of through repair in addition to any other penalty which the Management Committee may impose.

3. In addition to the Cup the League shall present medals to the players and substitutes in the final tie.
4. The League Cup will be competed for by all Clubs competing in the Midland Women's Combination League.
5. Only players registered for a Club shall be eligible to play for that Club in any one season. A player shall not play for more than one Club in the League Cup Competition in any one season. A Club playing an ineligible player shall be removed from the Competition and be subject to a fine as decided by the Management Committee.
6. The Competition may be played on a knock-out basis. The ties shall be drawn as soon as possible after each round. If possible the draw will be made at a Management Committee meeting. In each tie the game shall be played on the ground of the Club first drawn, unless otherwise mutually arranged, and the consent of the Management Committee is obtained. In all rounds including the final, 90 minutes must be played in all matches. If the teams are level after 90 minutes, an extra fifteen minutes each way is to be played. If the scores are level after extra time has been played the tie shall be determined by the taking of penalty kicks in accordance with the laws of the game.
7. All matches in this Competition shall be played in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Midland Women's Combination League, the Football Association and the Laws of the game.
8.
Any team failing to honour their main division league cup commitments on the scheduled date will be removed from the competition and fined a sum of £50.00.
Any team failing to honour their reserve division league cup commitments on the scheduled date will be removed from the competition and fined a sum of £50.00.

The Midland Women's Combination League Reserve Section Cup

Competition will apply to the Reserve Section Cup with the following changes:-

The Competition shall be called the Midland Women's Combination League Reserve Section Cup, and shall be open to Reserve teams only competing in the Midland Women's Combination League.

A player shall not be eligible to play for a Reserve team in the Reserve Section Cup Semi-Final or Final unless the player has played three games for that Reserve team during the current season.

Regulations for Football Association Appeals

Commencement of Appeal

"An appeal to an Appeals Board of the Football Association shall be made and be conducted only in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of The Football Association that relate to appeals to an Appeals Board as are in force at any time."

1.1 An appeal shall be commenced by lodging a notice of appeal ("the Notice of Appeal") with The Association.

1.2 The Notice of Appeal shall be lodged within 14 days of the date of notification of the decision appealed against. In the case of an appeal from a decision of a Disciplinary Commission, the date of notification of the decision shall be the date of the written decision or, if applicable, the date of the written reasons for the decision. In relation to any other decision, the relevant date shall be the date on which it was first announced.

1.3 The Notice of Appeal must:

- (1) identify the specific decisions being appealed;
- (2) set out the ground(s) of appeal and the reasons why it would be substantially unfair not to alter the original decision;
- (3) set out a statement of the facts upon which the appeal is based;
- (4) be accompanied by any deposit prescribed by the relevant Rules or Regulations. Where an appeal is lodged by fax, the deposit must be received not later than the third day following the day of despatch of the fax (including both the day of despatch and receipt);
- (5) where appropriate, apply for leave to present new evidence under 2.6 below.

1.4 The grounds of appeal shall be that the body whose decision is appealed against:

- (1) misinterpreted or failed to comply with the rules or regulations relevant to its decision; and/or
- (2) came to a decision to which no reasonable such body could have come; and/or
- (3) imposed a penalty, award, order or sanction which is excessive.

1.5 Once an appeal has been commenced, it shall not be withdrawn except by leave of the Appeal Board, with such order for costs as the Appeal Board may consider appropriate.

Appeal Proceedings

2.1 An Appeal Board shall proceed as set out below.

2.2 Reference to a party or parties' means:

- (1) the appellant (the "Appellant"); and
- (2) The Association in the case of an appeal against a decision of the Disciplinary Commission, or the Affiliated Association or Competition whose decision is appealed against (the "Respondent").

2.3 The Respondent shall nominate an individual or individuals to represent it before the Appeal Board.

2.4 The Respondent shall serve a written reply to the Notice of Appeal (the "Reply") on an Appellant and the Appeal Board within 21 days of the lodging of the Notice of Appeal. Where appropriate, the Reply must include any application for leave to present new evidence under 2.6 below.

2.5 The parties shall be entitled to make oral submissions to the Appeal Board but an appeal shall be by way of a review on documents only, without oral evidence, except where the Appeal Board gives leave to present new evidence under 2.6 below.

2.6 The Appeal Board shall hear new evidence only where it has given leave that it may be presented. An application for leave to present new evidence must be made in the Notice of Appeal or the Reply, setting out the nature and the relevance of the new evidence, and why it was not presented at the original hearing. Save in exceptional circumstances, the Appeal Board shall not grant leave to present new evidence unless satisfied with the reason given as to why it was not, or could not have been, presented at the original hearing and that such evidence is relevant. The Appeal Board's decision shall be final.

2.7 The Chairman of an Appeal Board may upon the application of a party or otherwise, give any instructions considered necessary for the proper conduct of the proceedings, including but not limited to:

- (1) extending or abridging any time limit;
- (2) amending or dispensing with any procedural steps set out in these Regulations;
- (3) instructing that a transcript be made of the proceedings;
- (4) ordering parties to attend a preliminary hearing;
- (5) ordering a party to provide written submissions.

The decision of the Chairman of the Appeal Board shall be final.

2.8 The Appeal Board may adjourn a hearing for such period and upon such terms (including an order as to costs) as it considers appropriate.

2.9 The Appellant shall prepare a set of documents which shall be provided to the Appeal Board and Respondent at least seven days before the hearing and which shall comprise the following (or their equivalent):

- (1) the Charge;
- (2) the Answer;
- (3) any documents or other evidence referred to at the original hearing relevant to the appeal;
- (4) any transcript of the original hearing;
- (5) the notification of decision appealed against and where they have been given the reasons for the decision;
- (6) any new evidence;
- (7) The Notice of Appeal;
- (8) The Reply.

Where the Disciplinary Commission or other body appealed against has not stated the reasons for its decision, either

(i) the Appellant shall request written reasons from that body which shall be provided to the Appeal Board; or

(ii) the Appeal Board shall require that a member of the body that made the decision shall attend (in which case, questions may be put by the Appeal Board at a hearing to satisfy itself as to the reasons for the decision. Cross-examination by the Appellant or Respondent shall not be permitted. Representations may be made by the parties to the Appeal Board who may then put questions to the member of the body that made the decision).

2.10 Appeal hearings shall be conducted how, when and where the Appeal Board considers appropriate. Reasonable notice shall be given by the Appeal Board of the date, time and venue of the appeal.

Where an application to present new evidence has been made, the party making the application shall address the Appeal Board in support of the application and the other party may respond; the Appeal Board shall then determine whether or not it will receive the new evidence. The following procedures shall be followed at an appeal hearing unless the Appeal Board thinks it appropriate to amend them:

- (1) The Appellant to address the Appeal Board, summarising its case;
- (2) Any new evidence to be presented by the Appellant;
- (3) The Respondent to address the Appeal Board, summarising its case;
- (4) Any new evidence to be presented by the Respondent;
- (5) Each party to be able to put questions to any witness giving new evidence;
- (6) The Appeal Board may put questions to the parties and any witness giving new evidence at any stage;
- (7) The Respondent to make closing submissions;

(8) The Appellant to make closing submissions.

2.1 1 The Appeal Board shall proceed in the absence of any party, unless it is satisfied that there are reasonable grounds for the failure of the party to attend, and shall do so in such manner as it considers appropriate.

2.1 2 The Appeal Board may, in the event of a party failing to comply with an order, requirement or instruction of the Appeal Board, take any action it considers appropriate, including an award of costs against the offending party.

Appeal Board Decisions

3.1 A decision, order, requirement or instruction of the Appeal Board shall (save where to be made under the Rules by the Chairman of the Appeal Board alone) be determined by a majority. Each member of the Appeal Board shall have one vote, save that the Chairman shall have a second and casting vote in the event of deadlock.

3.2 A decision of the Appeal Board shall be final and binding and there shall be no right of further challenge.

3.3 The Appeal Board shall have power to:

- (1) allow or dismiss the appeal;
 - (2) exercise any power which the body against whose decision the appeal was made could have exercised, whether the effect is to increase or decrease any penalty, award, order or sanction originally imposed;
 - (3) remit the matter for re-hearing;
 - (4) order that any deposit be forfeited or returned as it considers appropriate;
- make such further or other order as it considers appropriate, generally or for the purpose of giving effect to its decision.

Costs

3.4 The Appeal Board shall have the power to make such order as to the costs of the original hearing and the appeal as it considers appropriate.

Announcement of Decision

3.5 The Appeal Board shall announce its decision to the parties as soon as practicable in such a manner as it considers appropriate; and unless it directs otherwise, its decision shall come into effect immediately.

Written Decision

3.6 As soon as practicable after the hearing, the Appeal Board shall publish a written statement of its decision, which shall state:

- (1) the names of the parties, the decisions) appealed against and the grounds of appeal;
- (2) whether or not the appeal is allowed; and
- (3) the order(s) of the Appeal Board.

The written statement shall be signed and dated by the Chairman of the Appeal Board and be the conclusive record of the decision.

The Appeal Board shall, upon the request of the Appellant or the Respondent (such request to be received at The Association within 5 days of the date of the announcement of the decision), give written reasons for the decision.

3.7 The Appeal Board shall, upon the request of the Appellant or the Respondent (such request to be received at The Association within five days of the date of the announcement of the decision), give written reasons for the decision.

THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

WOMEN'S PYRAMID OF FOOTBALL GROUND GRADING

GRADING CATEGORY – B

Steps 3

1. GROUND

The ground must give an overall appearance and impression of being a football ground suitable for the highest levels of the Women's Pyramid of Football.

1.1 Security of Tenure

Where a club does not own the freehold of their ground then evidence of adequate security of tenure for one season must be provided.

1.2 Club House

There must be a clubhouse facility either on or near-by to the ground, which should be open on match days to provide refreshments to spectators.

1.3 Car Parking

There should be adequate car parking facilities on or near-by to the ground.

1.4 Pitch Perimeter Barrier

There should be a permanent fixed barrier of sound construction surrounding the pitch on all four sides of the pitch. The recommended height of the barrier is a minimum of 1.1 metres.

Where no permanent fixed barrier is available, the pitch must be roped off

1.5 Pitch Standards

The playing surface will be grass, unless otherwise authorised by the respective league Management Committee, and must be of a high standard. It must be level and free from surface depressions and excessive undulations.

The maximum slope allowable shall not exceed an even gradient of vertical to horizontal 1 : 41 in any direction.

The playing surface must be maintained to the highest possible standards.

New generation rubber infill pitches will be permitted, with prior consent of the FA Women's Football Committee and the appropriate League Management Committee, provided that the artificial turf meets the following conditions:

- (a) the artificial turf meets any of the applicable FIFA quality standards for artificial turf, currently corresponding to the "FIFA Recommended 2-Star Standard", the "FIFA Recommended 1-Star Standard" in accordance with the "FIFA Quality Concept - Handbook of Test Methods and Requirements for Artificial Turf Football Surfaces" dated February 2005 as well all requirements under the applicable national laws and regulations; and
- (b) the artificial turf has passed all the necessary tests (laboratory and field tests) and, in the case of "FIFA Recommended 2-Star Standard" or "FIFA Recommended 1-Star Standard", has obtained the required FIFA licence; and
- (c) the artificial turf has passed all the necessary yearly tests confirming that it still meets the applicable FIFA quality standards. Such tests must be conducted by a FIFA accredited laboratory; and
- (d) the surface of the artificial turf must be of a green colour.

A Club using a new generation rubber infill pitch must allow their opposition the opportunity to train on the facilities prior to the fixture. Players must not wear boots with blades or metal studs.

1.6 Playing Area

The playing area to be a minimum of 100 metres by 64 metres (110 yards x 70 yards) and should conform to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Goal posts and goal net supports should be of professional manufacture and conform to the current safety requirements and to the requirements of the Laws of the Game.

Reference should be made to the Goalpost Safety information published by The Football Association.

1.7 Technical Area

Two covered trainers benches clearly marked "Home" and "Away" are to be provided. They should be at least 3 metres apart. Each box should accommodate at least 8 persons on fixed seats or benches.

Portable trainers' boxes are permitted and must be securely fixed when in use.

A Technical Area, as defined within the Laws of the Game should be marked out round each trainer's box.

1.8 Secure Walkway

Clubs are to provide for safe passage for players and match officials from the dressing rooms to the field of play.

2. DRESSING ROOM FACILITIES

All dressing rooms must be secure, heated, well ventilated and free from damp

2.1 Players

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for both teams within the enclosed area of the ground. Existing dressing rooms dimensions will be in order provided that they are of a minimum of 12 square metres. However, clubs wishing to progress should be aware of the need to increase to a minimum of 18 square metres. Where clubs are planning to build new changing rooms, these must be planned to be a minimum size of 18 square metres, excluding shower and toilet areas.

Each dressing room must have the following:

- A shower area comprising of at least 4 showerheads
- At least 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin together with a warm air hand drier and/or paper towels in an appropriate dispenser.
- All must have hot and cold running water

There must be a treatment table in each dressing room unless there is a separate medical room.

2.2 Match Officials

Separate dressing rooms must be provided for match officials, the minimum size of which shall be 4 square metres excluding shower and toilet areas.

Each dressing room must have the following:

- At least 1 shower
- At least 1 WC and 1 wash hand basin together with a warm air hand drier and/or paper towels in an appropriate dispenser.

Provision should be made for separate changing accommodation for both male and female match officials.

There must be an audible electronic warning device (bell or buzzer) located in the match official's dressing room, which is linked to the player's dressing rooms.

All dressing room areas to be maintained to a high level of cleanliness and secure on match days