



**LEAGUE AND LEAGUE CUP/PLATE RULES  
FOR THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S FOOTBALL YOUTH REGIONAL LEAGUES 2024  
("THE RULES")**

Rules for the North, East, West, Central, South-West and South-East Regions from age group 5's to 18's.

**INTRODUCTION**

- (a) Unless the context otherwise requires, words or expressions contained in the League and League Cup/Plate Competition Rules shall bear the same meaning as in the Articles of Scottish Women's Football.
- (b) Unless the context otherwise requires, words importing the singular only shall include the plural and vice versa.
- (c) The headings are inserted for convenience only and shall not affect the construction of the Rules.
- (d) All references to a ground shall mean a registered ground, unless otherwise specified, within the context of these Rules.
- (e) Disciplinary matters relating to field offences and club officials' misconduct shall be dealt with in accordance with the relevant Disciplinary Procedures of Scottish Women's Football.

**1. Name of Competitions**

The League shall be called "The Scottish Women's Football Youth Regional League" (the League(s)) unless title sponsorship is achieved.

The League Cup(s) shall be called "The Scottish Women's Football Youth Regional League Cup" (the League Cup(s)) unless title sponsorship is achieved.

The League Plate(s) shall be called "The Scottish Women's Football Youth Regional League Plate" (the League Plate(s)) unless title sponsorship is achieved.

Scottish Women's Football shall organise and administer the League(s) and the League Cup/Plate(s) in accordance with the Rules and the Laws of the Game, and as directed by the Regional League Management Committees, in conjunction with the Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group for the 14's, 16's and 18's age groups.

**2. Management, Nomination and Election**

- (a) The League(s) and the League Cup/Plate(s) shall be governed, in accordance with the Rules and the standard procedures of the Scottish Women's Football (SWF) Youth Regional Leagues, Scottish Women's Football and the Scottish FA, by (six) Regional League Management Committees (Regional Management Committees).



Each Regional Management Committee shall comprise a total of six representatives.

The representative's period of tenure shall be for one year from the date of appointment.

Within each region, three representatives shall be nominated by the SWF Youth Regional Leagues or (Cross-Regional League), from members elected at a Regional Annual General Meeting, also referred to as an End of Season Meeting, of all clubs in that region.

Scottish Women's Football shall nominate a further three representatives, including the Chairperson.

For Cross-Regional Leagues, three representatives shall be nominated by the clubs participating within it, from members elected prior to the commencement of that League's season.

A League Administrator, employed by Scottish Women's Football, shall provide secretariat and administrative support to the Regional Management Committee.

Regional Management Committee members representing the SWF Youth Regional Leagues (retiring club representatives included) shall be eligible to become candidates for re-election without nomination.

Other club representatives seeking election to the Regional Management Committee shall be nominated by forwarding to the League Administrator in writing their intention to stand for election and shall be formally supported in writing by the individual's member club.

Within each region, the names of the candidates for election shall be circulated with the notice of the Regional Annual General Meeting of the SWF Youth Regional Leagues for that region. In the event of there being no nomination in accordance with the terms aforesaid, nominations may be received at the Regional Annual General Meeting.

If an election is required to determine the Management Committee representatives from the SWF Youth Regional Leagues, this will be conducted on the day of the Regional Annual General Meeting by ballot.

(a) The Management Committee shall meet as often as is necessary to deal with business as it arises.

(b) Except where otherwise stated, all communications shall be addressed to the League Administrator who shall be responsible for all League and League Cup/Plate correspondence and the proceedings of the Regional Management Committee.

Electronic mail (e-mail) shall be the primary method of communication used by clubs and the League Administrator in all correspondence.

Club communications and correspondence must be issued by the nominated Club Secretary and/or another nominated club official.



### **3. Powers of Management**

(a) Each Regional Management Committee has responsibility for all matters relating to the League(s) and the League Cup/Plate Competition(s) within their own Region. The Regional Management Committee shall consider, review and implement, where appropriate, recommendations of the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group.

(b) Each member of the Regional Management Committee shall have the right to attend and vote at all Regional Management Committee meetings and have one vote thereat. No member shall be allowed to vote on any matter directly appertaining to themselves or the club which they represent.

In the event of voting being equal on any matter, the Chairperson shall have a second and casting vote.

(c) The Regional Management Committee shall have powers to apply, act upon and enforce the Rules and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters affecting the League(s) and the League Cup/Plate Competition(s) in consultation with the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group, including any not provided for in the Rules.

Except where the 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 notified in writing and given the opportunity to present their case before the Regional Management Committee.

(d) The decisions of the Regional Management Committee shall be binding subject to the right of appeal in accordance with Article 44 of the Scottish Women's Football Appeals Procedure and Guidelines.

Decisions of the Regional Management Committee (Rule 29 (c) excluded) must be notified in writing to those concerned within seven days.

The decision against which any appeal is made will only be set aside when the appeal is received by Scottish Women's Football and agreed to be in order, and confirmation is received in writing by the parties concerned in accordance with Article 43 of the Scottish Women's Football Appeals Procedure and Guidelines.

Any decision taken by Scottish Women's Football is subject to appeal to the Judicial Panel of the Scottish FA in accordance with the Scottish FA Articles of Association and Judicial Panel Protocol.

(e) The quorum for any meeting of the Regional Management Committee shall be three.

(f) The Regional Management Committee shall, as it may deem necessary, have the power to fill in an acting capacity, any vacancies that may occur on the committee after consultation with the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group.

### **4. The League Trophy and the League Cup/Plate Trophy – Ownership and Presentation (for age group 14's, 16's and 18's)**



- (a) The trophies, including any replicas, are the property of SWF Youth Regional Leagues.
- (b) The League trophies shall be presented to the team which wins each of the Leagues. The League Cup/Plate trophies shall be presented to the team which wins each of the League Cups/Plates.
- (c) The League Cup/Plate trophies shall be engraved and returned to the Regional Management Committee at the request of the League Administrator in the year following presentation, in good order and condition.

The League trophies shall be engraved and returned to the Regional Management Committee before the end of September in the year following presentation, in good order and condition.

## **5. Awards to Players and Officials**

The Regional Management Committee shall present 20 medals, in such form as the Regional Management Committee may decide to the winners of each of the Leagues.

The Regional Management Committee shall present 20 medals, in such form as the Regional Management Committee may decide to the winners and the runners up of each of the League Cup/Plate Competitions.

## **6. Eligible Clubs**

The clubs competing in the League(s) and the League Cup/Plate Competition(s) must be in membership of Scottish Women's Football and the appropriate SWF Youth Regional League.

## **7. Compliance with Articles, League and League Cup/Plate Competition Rules**

The clubs eligible to participate in the Competitions shall be subject to both the Articles of Scottish Women's Football, the Scottish FA, the Rules and all other SWF Policies as amended from time to time.

## **8. Season**

The Competitions shall run as decided by the Regional Management Committee following recommendation by the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group in accordance with the Scottish FA's Annual Programme for Girls'/Women's Football.

## **9. Confirmation of Clubs Competing in the League**

- (a) The Regional Management Committee shall confirm which clubs shall compete in the League(s) in consultation with the Strong Quality Growth Committee and the Girls'/Women's



Policy Working Group.

(b) All League Clubs shall complete the annual affiliation process, including provision of required documentation and payment in full, to Scottish Women's Football

Clubs admitted to the League(s) shall pay an Affiliation Fee paid to Scottish Women's Football as part of the annual affiliation process.

Clubs eligible to compete in the Competitions shall be subject to the Articles of Scottish Women's Football, the Youth Challenge Cup Rules and all SWF Policies as amended from time to time.

## **10. League Fixtures**

(a) The League Competition shall consist of each team playing one match at home and one match away from home with each of the other teams in the League, unless otherwise directed by the Regional Management Committee in consultation with the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group.

The fixtures shall be arranged in the manner directed by the Regional Management Committee and shall be played on the dates arranged.

Three points shall be awarded to a team for a win, one point for a draw and no points for a loss (except for the 8's - 10's and 12's Leagues, which are trophy-free leagues).

The League Administrator shall issue the grading fixtures not later than 2nd February prior to the commencement of each season. Receipt of fixtures shall be acknowledged in writing by each club. The League Administrator shall issue the League fixtures following the completion of grading fixtures. Receipt of fixtures shall be acknowledged in writing by each club.

The Regional Management Committee shall determine the playing day of each league prior to the season commencing. Any team unable to play on the prescribed playing day shall apply for playing day dispensation to the Regional Management Committee. Should dispensation be granted, teams shall be notified of approved dispensations prior to the season commencing.

The home club shall, by 6pm not later than five days prior to a fixture date, confirm the venue (including travel directions), kick-off time and the colour(s) they are intending to play in, in writing to the opposing club, the League Administrator and the appointed match official(s) and/or the Regional Referee Co-ordinator.

It is the responsibility of the home team to advise the match official(s), once appointed, of the match arrangements as outlined above. The away club shall seek and acknowledge receipt of such notification.

For Sunday matches, match details are to be supplied by 6pm not later than the Tuesday before. Kick-off times for a Saturday or Sunday match shall be between 9am and 5pm unless mutually agreed otherwise. If the distance travelled one way exceeds 100 miles, the kick-off times shall be between 12pm and 4pm unless mutually agreed otherwise. Kick-off times for a Monday-Friday match shall be no later than 8pm unless mutually agreed otherwise.



If a club cancels or postpones a fixture after they receive notification of their match appointment, the club may be liable to remunerate the referee with half of the match fee. Any dispute between match official and club as to the arrangement of payment shall be referred to and decided by the League Administrator and the appropriate referee coordinator.

The final round of League fixtures, in each season, shall, where possible, have all matches scheduled with the same time of kick-off, unless otherwise agreed by the Regional Management Committee.

(b) Any dispute between two or more clubs as to the arrangement of fixtures shall be referred to and decided by the Regional Management Committee.

(c) If a club wishes to apply for a postponement of a fixture date, such notification must be made to the League Administrator not later than seven days prior to the date of the originally scheduled fixture. Such application must be made on a form supplied by the Regional Management Committee containing the reason for the application, the opposing club's approval and an agreed proposed new fixture date.

Postponement of a cup/plate game shall only occur with mutual agreement between both the opposing teams and the League Administrator. In the absence of unanimous agreement regarding postponement, the original fixture date must be adhered to.

Teams may only be granted a maximum of 3 postponements in any one season with the exception of postponements granted due to players on International Duty or a Scottish Cup/Challenge Cup or League Cup/Plate fixture taking precedence and may not apply for any postponements after the 1<sup>st</sup> of October in any season. Teams may apply for additional postponement applications in extenuating circumstances to the Regional Management Committee.

If, for unforeseen reasons, the home club is forced to change ground, the club must notify the League Administrator, the visiting club and the appointed match official(s) immediately.

Where a club's ground (or standby ground) is unplayable or unavailable on the day set for the playing of the match, both clubs can agree to reverse the venue.

No alterations of fixtures, dates, kick-off times, grounds can be made without the prior confirmation of the League Administrator.

(d) Notice of the postponement of any match due to an unplayable ground, or other causes over which neither club has control, must be given immediately by the home club to the visiting club, the appointed match official(s) and the League Administrator. Any club failing to comply with instructions in this regard shall be referred to the Regional Management Committee.

The home club should, where possible, be able to provide the League Administrator/Regional Management Committee with a written confirmation of a decision to postpone a match due to an unplayable ground, signed by the ground owner or the match official.

It is the responsibility of both competing clubs to agree upon a re-scheduled fixture date and advise the League Administrator, in writing, within seven days from the original fixture date.



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Failing such agreement and notification to the League Administrator, the Regional Management Committee shall have power to determine the re-scheduled fixture date.

(e) The postponement or abandonment of League fixtures requires to be immediately reported in writing to the League Administrator by the club(s) concerned.

In the event of a late arrival of a team, the match official may delay the kick-off of the match up to a maximum of 30 minutes. The match official shall report the circumstances of a late kick-off or postponement of the match, as applicable, to the League Administrator.

The league will consider specific factors as to why the game was abandoned such as but not limited to; duration of match played, reason for abandonment, time of season and calendar constraints.

(f) Any match not completed, except as provided for in Rule 29 "Infringements of Rules", may be ordered to stand as a played match, or may be replayed in its entirety as the Regional Management Committee may determine.

(g) In extenuating circumstances, the Regional Management Committee shall have the power to re-schedule matches, other than those prescribed in this Rule, to facilitate the smooth running of the Competition.

(h) Any club without just cause failing to fulfil its fixture obligations in respect of any such match in the League on the appointed date or dates shall be liable to such sanctions as the Regional Management Committee and/or League Administrator may determine, but not limited to the deduction of points, fine or expulsion.

Sanctions:

Ineligible player and/or Team line infringement:

- a) 3-0 awarded to opponent.
- b) Monetary fine of £50

Failure to fulfil (League):

- a) In the first instance 3-0 awarded to opponent.
- b) Second occasion as above and an additional point deduction
- c) Third occasion, as above (g and h) a further 1-point deduction and Club referred to a meeting with LA and CDO.
- e) The LMC may also award compensation for pitch, referee and travel costs where bus/minibus has been hired where it deems it reasonable in the circumstances to do so.

Failure to fulfil (Cup/Plate):

- a) 3-0 awarded to opponent.
- b) The LMC may also deem compensation for pitch, referee and travel costs where bus/minibus has been hired.

Unable to source venue

- a) Reversal of fixture



b) Match awarded to opponent 3-0

Failure to supply match arrangements:

a) Sanction may apply where LA or LMC deem necessary.

Further sanctions may apply on failure to fulfil fixtures, including but not limited to point deduction, monetary fine, or expulsion from the competition as determined by League Management Committee if the circumstances warrant a stricter application than the above sanctions due to the nature or manner of the failure.

(i) Any club failing to fulfil its fixture obligations shall be liable to pay compensation for any actual expenses incurred as a direct result of its failure. The amount of compensation payable in these circumstances will be determined by the Regional Management Committee and shall be based upon the current tariff approved by the Regional Management Committee.

Applications for reimbursement shall be lodged in writing with the League Administrator not later than five days following the match.

(j) In the event of a team withdrawing during the course of the playing season, all points gained by teams winning or drawing against the team withdrawing from a League shall be deducted, unless otherwise decided by the Regional Management Committee. Similarly, goals for and against shall be declared null and void.

For the avoidance of doubt, the team will also be removed from League Cup/Plate and Challenge Cup Competitions.

(k) It is the responsibility of the home club to notify the match result and related information to the League Administrator in accordance with the guidelines agreed by the Regional Management Committee.

(l) A team has a player(s) selected for the Scottish FA's National Youth teams, Regional Squad activities, Scottish Schools National Youth team or Scottish Schools Cup tie is entitled to have a League or League Cup/Plate match postponed, if application is made within three days of the date of the relevant player selection notice.

(m) The home club must ensure that the visiting club and the match official(s) have access to the changing facilities (for the avoidance of doubt this includes toilet and hand washing facilities) a minimum of 60 minutes prior to a League and League Cup/Plate match. If venue cannot be found with toilet facilities and all possible options explored, clubs must instead sign post the nearest appropriate facilities.

(n) The home club must also ensure that the visiting club and the match official(s) have access to the pitch for a minimum of 15 minutes warm up on top of additional warm up space available.

## **11. League Positions (With the exception of 8's -10's and 12's as these games will be trophy-free)**





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(a) At the end of the season's League Competition, the team in each League securing the highest number of points shall be declared the Champion team of the League.

(b) For the purpose of clarification, if two or more teams are equal on points upon completion of the League, the following criteria are applied to determine the League Champions:

There would be a play-off match, or matches, between the teams in question, at which two periods of extra time, and kicks from the penalty mark if required, would be applicable, to determine the winner. The playoff will be played on the ground of the club first drawn in the ballot who shall pay for facility hire. The away club shall pay for the match official fee.

For all circumstances not covered in the paragraphs above, the Regional Management Committee will have full powers to deal with the situation as it deems appropriate in consultation with the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group.

(c) If any team(s) in the Leagues is expelled, resigns, or retires for any reason before the commencement of the playing season, the Regional Management Committee will have full powers to deal with the situation as it deems appropriate in consultation with the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group.

## **12. League Cup/Plate Ties**

(a) All clubs in the League shall enter the League Cup competition. Clubs who do not wish to enter the League Cup should inform the Cup Administrator by the date prescribed by the Cup Administrator.

(b) The League Cup draw will be an all-in draw, or such other format as directed by the Regional Management Committee in consultation with the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group, and ties shall be arranged in the manner approved by the Regional Management Committee and shall be played on the dates arranged.

(c) The League Plate will be an all-in draw between teams eliminated in the League Cup from a round(s) determined by the Regional Management Committee, or such other format as directed by the Regional Management Committee in consultation with the Strong Quality Growth Committee and Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group, and ties shall be arranged in the manner approved by the Regional Management Committee and shall be played on the dates arranged.

(d) The home club shall, by 6pm not later than five days prior to a fixture date, confirm the venue (including travel directions), kick-off time and the colour(s) they are intending to play in, in writing to the opposing club, the Cup Administrator and the appointed match official(s) and/or the Regional Referee Co-ordinator. It is the responsibility of the home team to advise the match official(s), once appointed, of the match arrangements as outlined above. The away club shall seek and acknowledge receipt of such notification.

For Sunday matches, match details are to be supplied by 6pm not later than the Tuesday before.

(e) Any dispute between two or more clubs as to the arrangement of League Cup/Plate ties shall



be referred to, and decided by, the Regional Management Committee.

(f) In each round except the final, all ties will be played on the ground of the club first drawn in the ballot.

Where a club's ground (or standby ground) is unavailable or unplayable, on the day(s) set for playing the tie, the competing clubs may agree to reverse the venue subject to the permission of the League Administrator.

The home club should, upon request, be able to provide the League Administrator / Regional Management Committee with a written confirmation of a decision to postpone a League Cup tie due to an unplayable ground, signed by the ground owner or match official.

(g) The Final of the League Cup/Plate Competition(s) will be played at a neutral venue, unless otherwise decided by the Regional Management Committee.

(h) Before the Semi-final and final rounds of a Cup/Plate tie, if the game is drawn at the end of normal play, the winner shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the rules laid down by the IFAB.

If a Semi-Final or Final League Cup/Plate tie is drawn at the end of normal play, extra time shall be played as set out below. Thereafter, if the tie is still undecided the winner shall be determined by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the rules laid down by the IFAB.

14's and 16's - Two halves of ten minutes duration.

18's – Two halves of fifteen minutes duration.

### **13. Grounds for League Fixtures and League Cup/Plate Ties**

All clubs in the Leagues shall have a registered ground, the specific details of which will be provided to the League Administrator and during completion of the club's online affiliation process prior to the commencement of the season.

### **14. Number of Players, Substitutes and Club Officials\***

For 14's, 16's and 18's age groups a team shall consist of eleven players and is permitted to list up to 7 substitutes of whom all may take part in the match. Players who have been substituted may return to the field of play as often as necessary.

Please refer to the SFA Grassroots app for 8s-10s and 12s (7v7 / 9v9) Squad sizes.

Up to a maximum of six approved officials may be listed on the official Team Line.

In League Cup/Plate ties, the players in a team may be changed from match to match, but a club or team, may not play, or list as a named substitute any player who, in the same season, has already played (as one of the eleven first named players or as a fielded substitute), for another club or team,



in any other League Cup/Plate Competition, irrespective of age-group or association.\*

*\*See 18s Annex for differentiation regarding specific 18s circumstances*

Players of teams who withdraw during the course of the playing season who had competed in the League Cup/Plate Competition shall not be considered cup tied and may participate in the same competition for one other club in the same playing season.

Rolling substitutes may be used in all matches.

### **15. Dimensions of the Field of Play\***

For 14's, 16's and 18's age groups the length of the field of play shall be compliant with the dimensions provided in the IFAB Laws of the Game.

Please refer to the SFA Grassroots app for 8s-10s and 12s (7v7 / 9v9) and 14s 9v9 dimensions of the field of play.

(a) Where possible, spectators should be separated from the field of play by a wall, a rope, a railing or a fence (the distance from the touchline should be a minimum of 1m).

(c) Spectators shall be positioned on the opposite side of the field of play from the technical areas.

(d) Technical areas, on the same side of the field of play, marked by lines/markers etc., shall be provided at each ground (the distance from the touchline should be 1m).

### **16. Playing Field**

Matches in the League(s) and the League Cup/Plate Competition(s) shall be played on a natural grass surface or on an artificial turf surface. Artificial turf surfaces must comply with quality standards set for football by FIFA.

Home clubs with artificial turf surfaces may be required to provide a letter from the ground owner/local authority confirming the standard of the surface, as part of the Club affiliation process

The home club is responsible for ensuring that the ground is of a standard that will not compromise the safety of players or spectators.

### **17. Goals, Goal Nets, Corner Flags**

Appropriate size goals with goal nets shall be used at all matches. Corner flags are recommended at all matches as per IFAB rules.

### **18. Provision of Footballs\***



Two footballs of first grade quality shall be provided by the home club for each match played in the League and the League Cup/Plate:

For 16's - 18's a size 5 ball will be used

For 14's a size 4 ball will be used

For 5's - 12's please see SFA Grassroots App

## **19. First Aid Provisions**

- a) It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that a club official in possession of a current Sports First Aid Certificate or equivalent qualification recognised by the Scottish FA is available at all matches played at its registered ground.

## **20. Player Registration and Eligibility**

To be eligible to participate in League and League Cup/Plate Competition football, players must be registered with the Scottish FA through Scottish Women's Football, in accordance with the terms of the Scottish Women's Football Registration Procedures.

To be eligible to participate in the League and League Cup/Plate Competitions, players must comply with the following Age Eligibility.

Age eligibility for Season 2024:

18's must be born on or after 1st January 2006

16's must be born on or after 1st January 2008

14's must be born on or after 1st January 2010

12's must be born on or after 1st January 2012

8's – 10's's must be born on or after 1st January 2014

5's – 7's must be born on or after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017

Minimum age eligibility in respective age groups:

18's must be born on or before 31st December 2008

16's must be born on or before 31st December 2010

14's must be born on or before 31st December 2012

12's must be born on or before 31st December 2014

8's -10's must be born on or before 31st December 2016

5's – 7's must be born on or before 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019

To play up age-groups out-with the eligibility criteria outlined above, dispensation approval is required.

Players can play in their club (as per above) in all League and League Cup/Plate matches. For avoidance of doubt, 2010's can play for 14s and 16s. 2007s can play 16s and 18s.



For the 2024 season, clubs can nominate three players that are 15 years of age that can play within their 18s squad without being tied to their 16s teams. These players will not be cup tied. A player list naming these three players must be submitted to your league administrator before the start of the season.

Players are cup tied for a team if they have already played, as one of the eleven first named players or as a fielded substitute, for another club or team, in any other League Cup/Plate Competition, irrespective of age-group. \*

*\*See 18s Annex for differentiation regarding specific 18s circumstances*

Age eligible players may also play in one senior League Cup/Plate Competition, without being considered cup tied for their recognised youth team.

- a) To be eligible to participate in the final of a League Cup/Plate Competition, a player must have been registered to play on the original date the semi-final tie was to be played. Goalkeepers may gain exemption from this rule, only on the written agreement of the Regional Management Committee
- b) A club which operates more than one team in the same age-group will not be permitted to move its players between these teams. This excludes teams from 12's and below, and players who wish to move to the Community team (Community Pathway) from the regional team (Club Pathway). Players moving from the Community team to a regional team must be assigned to a "List of Players" as detailed below.

A "List of Players" is required for all clubs operating more than one team at the same age group across or within the Regional and Community pathways. For the avoidance of doubt, a club operating two Regional 14's teams and a community 14's team must submit a "List of Players" for each team, duly signed, to the League Administrator by the date notified by the Regional Management Committee.

In such circumstances, to be eligible to play in a Regional League or League Cup/Plate match, a player must be denoted on the team's "List of Players" or be a registered youth player from a younger age group for the club. For the avoidance of doubt, registered youth players from a younger age group may only play for one team from the older age-group and may not move between more than one older team at the same age group, unless "List of Players" amendments are made.

A team's "List of Players" shall include the name, date of birth and registration date of every registered player. Amendments to a team's "List of Players" may be made in accordance with the provisions outlined below up to and including the 15<sup>th</sup> of October.

A team may amend its "List of Players", with regards to one individual player, twice in any one season, once in the first half of the season (February – June) and once in the second half (August – December).

In effect, a player registered with a club who has more than one team at the same age group,



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may move from one team to the other and back to their original team, once in the period February - June and once in the period August – December.

- c) Clubs with more than one team participating in different youth leagues, will be permitted to move their players with the following restrictions:
  - i) A player registered to the National Academy Programme/ Youth Performance League is not permitted to play in any youth regional team's matches. However, a youth regional team player can be listed as one of the starting 11, or a substitute that participates in the game across the Academy Programme for a maximum of three games as a trialist.
  - ii) For the avoidance of doubt, a regional player who is listed to play within the National Academy Programme/ Youth Performance League, will be permitted to play the following match for their youth regional team.
  - iii) National Academy Programme players are not permitted to take part in the Youth Scottish Challenge Cup (which is reserved for regional teams/players). A regional player, however, may be able participate in the Scottish Youth Cup and the Youth Scottish Challenge Cup.
- d) Players registered to a Performance playing season (Academy Pathway) are not permitted to play in the Youth Regional League or League Cup/Plate Competitions. In extenuating circumstances, teams may apply for dispensation to the Regional Management Committee.
- e) A club's youth players can also, in accordance with the Rules of the Scottish Women's Premier League, Scottish Women's Championship, Scottish Women's Football League play in their club's senior team(s) providing they have attained 15 years of age and that these teams are formally registered within their club.
- f) It is the responsibility of each club to ensure that its players are eligible to play in League and League Cup/Plate Competition matches.
- g) Any team fielding an ineligible player in a League fixture, or a League Cup/Plate tie may have points deducted from its points total in the League, or the result being awarded 3-0 in favour of the opposing team, and/or be liable to other such penalties as the Regional Management Committee may decide.
- h) If a player participates in a League fixture or a League Cup/Plate tie whilst being ineligible to play in the match as a result of a suspension imposed by League Administrator, in accordance with SWF's Disciplinary Procedures, the team for which the player has participated may have points deducted from its points total in the League, or the result being awarded 3-0 in favour of the opposing team, and/or be liable to other such penalties as the Regional Management Committee may decide.
- i) Pending suspensions can only be served by registered players.
- j) SWF can give dispensation to players (one year too old for an identified age group) to play at the age level immediately below their age for a period of one season in accordance with the dispensation guidelines.



Applications in this regard must be submitted to the Strong Quality Growth Committee in writing and in accordance with timelines outlined in dispensation guidelines.

The overage player can only play for the team they have received dispensation to represent for the duration of the season (i.e. 15-year-old given dispensation to play 14's cannot move between 16's & 14's)

Clubs must ensure that their team(s) have a maximum of 1 overage player on the pitch at any given time at 12's level, a maximum of 2 at 14's level and a maximum of 2 at 16's level.

- k) International clearance must be sought for all players that are coming to Scotland to play in an organised competition in line with SWF's International Clearance form.

## **21. Playing of Players without Registration (Trialists)**

- a. No more than three unregistered players ("Trialists") may be allowed to play or be listed as a substitute for a club in any League match.
- b. Each Trialist may be allowed to play in, or be listed as a substitute for, a maximum of three games for any one club, provided she is otherwise eligible to do so. Clubs playing a player in these circumstances must indicate the fact by adding the letter "T".
- c. or "X" after the player's name and date of birth on the official Team Line.
- d. A Trialist may not be used in any League Matches after the 15<sup>th</sup> of October in the current season.
- e. The Players Registration window shall close on 15th October in each regional season.
- f. The Players Registration window shall open for your clubs once affiliation is complete and your club has been approved.
- g. A player shall not be eligible to play for a club in a League Cup/Plate tie unless registered for the club.

## **22. Team Lines**

Team lines from 14s, 16s, 18s must be generated on SFA Live. If you cannot generate your team lines on SFA Live, you must notify your League Administrator before Friday at 12pm. Sanctions will apply as per Rule 10.

- (a) From 12's age-group, not later than 30 minutes before the start of a match, each club shall hand to the referee, a list, and to its opponent, a copy, both of which shall be signed by the Secretary or other accredited club official, of the proper names of the players in its team, of such substitutes



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as are permitted, and of the club officials on forms provided by the Regional Management Committee.

Should any nominated player or substitute sustain an injury, or due to extenuating circumstances, be unable to participate after the submission of the list of players to the referee and prior to kick-off, the following provisions shall apply:

- (i) If any of the first 11 players listed on the Team Line is not able to start the match for any reason, they may be replaced by any of the substitutes. Such replacements will reduce the quota of substitute players accordingly. Rolling substitutes may still be used as required.
- (ii) If any of the substitutes listed on the Team Line is not able to be fielded for any reason, they may not be replaced, which means that the quota of substitute players will be reduced accordingly.
- (iii) If a goalkeeper listed on the Team Line cannot be fielded for any reason, she may be replaced by another goalkeeper not previously listed on the Team Line.
- (b) Within three days thereafter the referee shall send to the League Administrator, the lists which were handed to him/her, which he/she shall also sign, and on which he/she shall intimate the result, the goal scorers, time of goals and which substitute, or substitutes played in the match.
- (c) Any club, on discovering an ineligible player has been listed on a team line should bring this to the immediate attention of the League Administrator, who shall advise.

The League Management Committee and take any required action.

### **23. Registered Colours**

- (a) As part of the annual affiliation process, a club shall register the colour of shirts, shorts and socks comprising its first and second choice playing kits. Subject to the terms of the paragraphs (b) (c) and (d) below, a club shall play in its registered colours,
- (b) failing which it shall be liable to disciplinary action. Exceptionally, a club may, with the approval of the Regional Management Committee, play in colours which are modified from those which have been registered.
- (c) When the first-choice colours of two competing clubs are the same, or similar, the away club shall change and play in distinctive colours.
- (d) A club may play in its second colours provided that this does not prevent its opponent from observing the terms of paragraph (b) or from playing in its first-choice registered colours if it chooses to do so.
- (a) If there is any dispute as to whether the colours of the teams are the same, or similar, the referee shall decide the issue.





(b) Goalkeepers shall wear colours which distinguish them from the other players and from the match official(s).

(c) Every player and substitute of each team shall wear a distinguishing number on her shirt or shorts. Such number shall be clearly distinct from the colours of the shirt and shorts in order that it is clearly visible. Numbers on shirts shall be a minimum of 25 cm and maximum of 35 cm in height, and those on shorts a minimum of 10 cm and a maximum of 15 cm. Numbers on a player's shirt or shorts worn during a match shall match the number against the player's name on the team line provided to the match official and opposition.

#### **24. Duration of League Matches**

- (a) For 18s a match will consist of two halves each of 45 minutes in duration  
For 16s a match will consist of two halves each of 40 minutes in duration  
For 14s a match will consist of two halves each of 35 minutes in duration

For 8's - 10's and 12s, please see SFA Grassroots app. Matches should be organised on a festival basis or as weekly fixtures and shall be trophy free. Festival format may require some flexibility in timing dependent on the venue and booking times.

(b) A match which has started and which for any reason is abandoned, may not be continued as a "friendly" match.

(c) The half time interval shall be of 10 minutes duration, or as otherwise determined by the referee.

#### **25. Appointment of Match Officials**

- (a) Match Official(s) shall be appointed by the Referee Co-ordinators acting on behalf of the Scottish FA Referees' Associations.

A club may not refuse the services of any match official appointed by, or on behalf of, the Scottish FA.

- (b) The home club is responsible for the payment of the match officials' fees for League matches and for all League Cup/Plate ties up to, and including, the Semi-Final Round.

Match official fees are as follows:

12's (7v7) - £30

12's (9v9) - £40

14's (9v9) - £40

14's – 18's (11v11) - £50

14s-18s (11v11) Assistant Referee: £25



14s-18s (9v9) Assistant Referee: £20

- (c) Should a match official not be notified of the postponement of a match before travelling, he/she shall be entitled to payment of one half of the match fee from the home club.
- (d) A match fee is deemed to be inclusive of expenses.
- (e) In the event that the appointed referee fails to appear, or no appointment can be made, it is the responsibility of the two participating clubs to reach a signed agreement with regards to appointing a match supervisor

## **26. Disorderly Conduct**

Clubs are responsible, where practically possible, for the behaviour of their players, officials, members, supporters and any person carrying out a function at a match on their behalf. In the event of damage being sustained to a ground where a League or League Cup Competition match is played as a consequence of misbehaviour by a player, official, member, supporters, or any other person acting on behalf of or associated with a club, then that club shall be responsible for any costs arising in the preparation of same.

The Regional Management Committee shall have the power to request such reports as may be necessary in determining responsibility for restitution and may additionally impose upon any club a censure, fine, expulsion from the competition or suspension if, in the opinion of the Regional Management Committee, a ground is the subject of damage by that club's representatives or those associated with it.

## **27. Infringement of Rules**

- (a) Any club, official, player, or other person, who infringes any of these Rules, shall be liable to a fine or suspension, or both or such other sanction(s) as specified within these Rules. The Regional Management Committee has the power to investigate, consider and determine any allegations relative to the infringement of these Rules and to impose such sanction(s), as specified within these Rules, as it considers appropriate in order to deal justly with the case in question.
- (b) A club which is found to have infringed these Rules, may be liable to replay a specific match in question, at a time, venue and other conditions as deemed appropriate by the Regional Management Committee in its absolute discretion.
- (c) In the event that the Regional Management Committee decides to impose a replay or suspension on a club which is found to have infringed these Rules, an appeal from the club against such decision must be dispatched in writing to Scottish Women's Football within three days of the date of the Regional Management Committee's written determination to the club.
- (d) Any club official, player or other person who wishes to make a formal complaint against an infringement of any of these rules or SWF policy must submit SWF's alleged breach of policy



form within 5 working days upon competition of the match. Exceptional circumstances will be considered.

## **28. Alterations and Additions to Rules**

- (a) All proposed alterations and additions must be submitted to the Board of the SWF, in consultation with the Girls'/Women's Policy Working Group for approval prior to the Regional League's AGM. They will then be presented to the SWF AGM for ratification and acceptance. No alterations or additions shall be made to these Rules except at the Annual General Meeting or at a General Meeting convened for that purpose. For the avoidance of doubt, any and all changes to these rules must be submitted for consideration and approval at the Regional League's AGM.
- (b) Notice of any proposed alteration or addition for consideration at the ensuing Regional Annual General Meeting of the Scottish Women's Football Youth Regional Leagues shall be submitted in writing and be received by the League Administrator no later than 31<sup>st</sup> August.
- (c) The League Administrator shall circulate a copy of any proposed amendments to all clubs not less than twenty-one days in advance of the Regional Annual General Meeting.

The Board of SWF, in consultation with the Girls/Women's Policy Working Group shall be empowered itself to propose any amendment.



## Annex 1 Youth Regional and Regional League Cup Rules – 2024

### Special provisions for the 18s competitions

For season 2024, players eligible to participate in the 18s competitions must be born within 2006-2008 ('The Rules' Section 20)

To support clubs, limited flexibility is being granted to 18s teams only and for those players within a Club's pathway born in 2009.

These additional and limited rules must therefore be read in conjunction with 'The Rules'. These special rules are only applicable for 18s competition, for players born in 2009 and are valid only until the end of season 2024.

All other elements of 'The Rules' apply to the competitions and clubs must abide by those. For avoidance of doubt, the flexibility outlined in this document relates only to the age of a player, all other eligibility matters and criteria must still be adhered to. It is the responsibility of clubs to ensure that eligibility is met and attained.

The rules governing the restrictions within that are below.

#### 1) 2009 special flexibility

**A maximum of three players from 2009 can be made eligible for participation in the 18s competition provided that the following criteria is met:**

- a) That the Club indicates to the Strong Quality Growth Committee via its secretary by 30<sup>th</sup> November the names of the players they wish to receive permission to play in the 18s team who are born in 2009.
- b) Clubs will have the opportunity to field up to three players that turn 15 before the 30<sup>th</sup> of June. Thereafter, will have the opportunity to amend these names in their new window for the remainder of the season for players born between 1<sup>st</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> December of that year.
- c) This flexibility does not apply to Clubs without a 16s team in their pathway.
- d) Clubs can still apply for dispensation for players for developmental purposes should they wish to, but the maximum number of players born in 2009 in a 18s team will be three, this can be made up from a combination of successful dispensation applications and using this flexibility clause. Clubs should set this out clearly to SWF in advance of the season beginning - for players with dispensation, usual dispensation rules and restrictions will apply.
- e) Clubs must prepare and submit to SWF development plans to illustrate how they will manage this flexibility with due regard for player wellbeing. That means clubs should include adequate explanation of actions to remedy any safeguarding risks that may occur due to young players participating within an older age group and should include the involvement of the club's CWPO. SWF will update clubs on deadlines for when these must be submitted. Should clubs not submit such plans, they will be subject to sanctions detailed at (r)
- f) The nomination of players to use this flexibility will last until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Thereafter, clubs will have the opportunity to amend the names. This window can include players born between 1<sup>st</sup> July and 31<sup>st</sup> December. This must come with an appropriately prepared and updated



- development plan that includes provision for new or different players added to a club list. Clubs wishing to do this must inform SWF of their intention by 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024.
- g) Should a player that has been nominated by a team become injured, the club must inform SWF. Only one name from the list of three can be swapped during up until 30<sup>th</sup> June and this can only be through injury. That request must be evidenced with a medical note. No other reason will be permitted to change a player's name until the new window opens again in June.
  - h) All development plans will be asked to be updated and refreshed by 31st May and will thereafter be valid for the remainder of the season.
  - i) Players that are granted this flexibility will also retain their ability to play within their 16s team which they are age eligible for.
  - j) Clubs must only ensure that such players play a maximum of 125 minutes over the course of the weekend to avoid player fatigue and undue player load. Players will also be permitted to play one midweek game in addition to this when required and when that replaces a training session.
  - k) Clubs should enact (j) by reporting to SWF by 5pm of the Tuesday following a weekend game and by 5pm the day after any midweek game how many minutes their flexible players have participated in.
  - l) Clubs should understand that SWF reserves the right to spot check the veracity of these reports.
  - m) Players granted this flexibility are only permitted to play for their 16s team and 18s team – they must remain within the youth pathway. For the avoidance of doubt, this means they may not play for any adult first team within the club. This avoids player fatigue.
  - n) Players must decide which team they will participate in cup games for – for the avoidance of doubt, players can only participate in one team for Challenge cup and League Cup competitions and are tied to that team thereafter.
  - o) Clubs should indicate five days before a game to the opposing team and SWF the underage players they will be fielding.
  - p) Regional LMCs will be provided with a player list to help govern this process.
  - q) Should a player receive a sanction, they must serve that in the team they received it in and are not permitted to play in any other age group whilst that sanction is served.
  - r) Should clubs and teams be found to deliberately act out with these rules by SWF, the relevant LMC or any board under the auspices of SWF, they will be liable to the following range of sanctions which will be decided by the regional LMC and applied as appropriate:
    - i) points deduction (the LMC will move to award the game as a three-nil victory to the opposing team should players be found to be ineligible)
    - ii) £100 fine plus application of a three-nil award to the opposing team
    - iii) Ejection from all competitions