

The Internet Football Association



Information for IFA Managers and Organisers

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a) Registration

Registration as outlined below lets you arrange and announce games, post scores and keep up to date with important announcements. You need to register on our email list at:

<http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/worldnet2002/>

Once registered announce your presence and start arranging games!

b) About the IFA

The Internet Football Association represents the teams of football e-mail discussion groups and message boards across the UK. At present we have members from all the Scottish and all the English divisions as well as a number of teams from mainland Europe. In the early nineties many supporters, particularly ex-pats kept in touch with other fans via email. These people tended to be mainly people in technical or academic employment as email was widely available in those professions. These are the people who formed the Internet Football Association in 1996. With the expansion of the world wide web we now include fans from all sorts of backgrounds as well as those who communicate via message boards as well as email lists.

Our founder is Dave "Voice of Football" Walmsley who at the time of Euro 96, wanted to show that football fans could come together in the spirit of the game, play football and build bridges between their respective teams. This was after Graham Kelly the then chief of the FA was publicly sceptical about the ability of English football supporters to behave themselves at Euro 96.

He organised at a tournament called Euronet 96 in Nottingham, one of the host cities for

Euro 96. Since then we have grown from the original 16 teams to over a hundred teams. We have an annual two-day knock out tournament, a league and a cup competition. Our competitions are UK based and encourage fans to play football regardless of their ability, gender, race or age.

Our teams normally play their league matches in the mornings before "the big match" and several clubs have been very helpful in ensuring that all those who have played in these matches are able to attend "the big match" that follows. Some clubs give free tickets to the visitors, others ensure that the visitors are able to buy tickets for the match. This is often done in conjunction with official supporters clubs, supporters' trusts and ISAs in which many of our players are leading lights. **Internet football is not just about winning. It's about taking part and building bridges between rival sets of supporters.**

Having said that we consider our leagues, competitions and tournaments professionally run and allow for an element of competition and pride in supporting one's home team. We have also ensured that we involve ourselves in the major footballing issues of the day especially anti-racism and anti-sectarianism. We have been successful in bringing fans of opposing teams together in the spirit of the game, to the point where quite unusual alliances and friendships have sprung up. None less than when the IFA cup takes place and teams criss cross the Anglo Scottish border in search of cup glory.

Our tournament, run at the University of Leeds, has been featured heavily on Sky Sports Television and UK Radio, we have hosted teams from Nigeria, Greece and France. WorldNET sees over a thousand fans enjoy two days of football. WorldNET 2008 saw our greatest number of teams ever - 64 - playing for both the Sports Interactive Cup and the Sports Interactive Plate and eight teams playing for the veteran's bowl. WorldNET 2009 is in Leeds on 24/25/26 July. This year we will feature the IFA Challenge Cup Final, an England versus Scotland International and a Veterans Tournament.

We maintain a website at www.internetfootball.org.uk and we also run our own e-mail discussion list at <http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/worldnet2002/>. There are copies of our league rules etc. at this site.

Wherever possible we encourage teams to forge links with their parent clubs - to the point where teams who have won our competitions have been presented to supporters on the pitch at senior games, have featured in club programmes and in the case of some clubs have been given official recognition along with support of a more material kind. This has taken the form of donations of kit, use of facilities, assistance with transport costs.

c) IFA Contacts

For further information about the IFA or if you have any queries about the information in this document contact John Boocock via john.boocock@internetfootball.org.uk

d) IFA LEAGUE

RULES AND MANAGEMENT 2009/10 ver1.3

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Rule 1 - IFA League Rules / Management

1.1 The League Structure

The IFA League is open to any bona fide Internet side. The IFA League is open to one team per each participating club. The IFA reserves the right not to accept a team into the IFA League.

1.1.1 Second Teams

Any participating club wishing to enter a second team must first seek the permission of the IFA Committee. A player must complete the entire season playing for the same team (ie A or B) there will be no switching between teams. Where a club has two teams in the league they may only play friendlies against each other.

1.1.2 Number of Games

The IFA League structure for season 2009/10 is based upon teams playing a maximum of 20 games

1.2 League Season Dates

The IFA league season starts on 27th July 2009 and ends on 18th July 2010.

1.3 Reporting Of Games / Results

IFA League games must be emailed to the IFAWorldNET Yahoo Group prior to them being played. The agreed format for announcing fixtures is as follows. To ensure that we spot announcements please send announcements in the subject field e.g.

[FIXTURE LEAGUE/CUP/FRIENDLY/LOCAL LEAGUE/LOCAL CUP* Sheff Wed vs Sheff Utd 01/04/10]

Following the game results likewise must be emailed to the IFAWorldNET Yahoo Group within 28 days of the fixture being played. The agreed format for announcing results is as follows. To ensure that we spot results please send results in the subject field e.g.

[RESULT LEAGUE/CUP/FRIENDLY/LOCAL LEAGUE/LOCAL CUP* Sheff Wed 0-15 Sheff Utd 01/04/10]

*(*delete where appropriate)*

It is important that the match date is included in the message. The yahoo group is at: <http://sports.groups.yahoo.com/group/IFAWorldNET/>. This is the only format we will accept for results. If you have any difficulty in announcing games or reporting results contact us via the IFA website using the [contact us page](#).

1.4 League Table / Point Scoring

Points are allocated by the 'agreed' format of teams receiving 3 points for winning a match, 2 points for drawing a match and 1 point for losing a match. The league table is sequenced by Points, Goal Difference, Goals Scored and otherwise alphabetically. Teams can only be played twice for league purposes (see rule 2.2 for the exception in Scotland).

1.5 League Table Hosting

The Official IFA League table is hosted on the IFA Stats website at: <http://www.freewebs.com/ifastats/>

1.6 Tournament Hosting

Teams may host their own tournaments; they will get NO additional points for doing so. Tournaments should be open to all (within geographical constraints), they should be advertised in advance on the list. Tournament matches will not be classed as League fixtures.

1.7 Discipline of Teams

It is the responsibility of the team to ensure that all team managers, players and supporters follow the agreed standards of behaviour both on and off the field. In the case of on the field activities it is expected that team managers / captains will remove the offending players from the field of play for the remainder of the game period. This is no place for hotheads. People wishing to behave in such manner should seek their entertainment elsewhere. Teams have agreed to be responsible for their own team's

actions so therefore there will be no need for any intervention by the IFA League committee. There will be no warnings on behaviour; if the committee feel the need to act they will do with Draconian effects to sides. This should not happen because you are all going to get on with it in the spirit it deserves.

Rule 2 IFA Game Rules - Guidelines For All Teams

2.1 Arranging Games

Matches are normally proposed via email between team organisers, 2 to 3 weeks in advance. Typically the home team organiser will invite the away team to play in the morning on a day when their supported clubs are playing each other in the afternoon, or where the away team's supported club is in the area that afternoon. Organisers will then canvas their respective mailing lists for available players, and if both receive enough interest then the proposed match will go ahead.

2.2 League or Friendly, Number of Players, Duration Of Game

The option of whether games are classified as IFA League games or friendlies is normally by agreement of both sides. Where teams are playing the same opponents for the third time with two 'League' games already counting it will automatically be deemed a friendly.

The exception to this rule will be in Scotland where (because of the nature of the Scottish League system) teams may play each other three times for IFA League points with a fourth and any subsequent games automatically being deemed friendlies.

A game cannot now be a League game for one side and a friendly for the opposition. All games will be deemed League games unless specifically requested to be excluded from the table in advance. Friendly games are to be encouraged to help sides develop especially for new sides.

(see also Rule 1.1.1 above Where a team has two teams in the league they may only play friendlies against each other.)

2.2.1 Minimum Number Of Players

The minimum number of players is eight to qualify as a game. Any team turning up with less than 8 (or indeed not turning up), 30 minutes after the tie is due to start, will automatically forfeit the game. You can then play a mixed friendly.

2.2.2 Duration Of games

The game must be the full 90 minutes, unless (due to extenuating circumstances) both teams agree to shortening the game. We would say minimum is 35 minutes each way with both teams agreeing to this and they must include full details of the truncation in the reporting of the result.

2.3 Eligible Players

Players selected to play in IFA League games must be list members. The use of "Ringers", ie non-list members, is frowned upon. The IFA League recognises that in exceptional circumstances, (eg where a team would otherwise have to pull out on the eve of a match or tournament), organisers may have no alternative other than to use one or two non-list members in order to meet their commitment to play. In such circumstances, the IFA League will not seek to penalise a team. However, if in the opinion of the IFA, an organiser has given preference to "ringers" over list-members in a deliberate attempt to improve the quality of his team, then this will be punishable with a points deduction. The IFA League may make random enquiries on mailing lists during the course of the season to insure that competing team organisers have given all list-members regardless of ability, every opportunity and encouragement to play. The use of players on loan from other mailing list teams is encouraged. This helps to foster relations between teams and encourages the inter-mingling of fans, which is what Internet football is all about.

2.4 Referees / Officials

Internet football is renowned for the friendly spirit in which matches are played. Although we do not specify a qualified referee, the use of one allows players to concentrate on the game and for the game to progress smoothly. In the absence of a qualified referee, where both teams have a full complement of players and substitutes, each team will referee a half each. Players are reminded that such referees will make mistakes but will have made an honest decision. Dissent is unnecessary and in contradiction to the spirit in which games are normally played. Common sense and honesty is called for on behalf of the players in order to assist the referee. Without linesmen, a referee is not going to be able to make a split second, fractional offside decision. It is generally accepted that only "very obvious" offside decisions can be given, and where there is no referee of any description, it is not feasible to play the offside rule.

2.5 Regional Leagues / IFA Cup

The growth of proposed 'regional' Leagues and the commitment to the IFA Cup is to be encouraged and should complement the national League. Games played subject to 'regionalised rules' where possible should be allowable for inclusion in the main League table. IFA Cup games are to count towards the League if teams request it.

2.6 Racism, Racist Abuse and Pro-diversity

Any incidence of racism or racist abuse will not be tolerated under any circumstances. It is EVERY participant's duty to ensure that the teams and individual participants are not subject to any form of racism or racist abuse. We gladly welcome all participants regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Any participant or team that fails to extend this welcome to their fellow participants is not welcome at any of our other activities.

e) WorldNET 10

WorldNET10 THE IFA CUP 23/24/25/ July 2010
University Of Leeds Bodington Hall Otley Rd Leeds LS16 5PT

1. format

Friday night will see a number of curtain raiser matches including the IFA Challenge Cup 09/10 final. Saturday will see a series of games between sixteen groups of competing teams; the winners and runners-up from all groups, will automatically qualify for day two of the Cup. The 3rd and 4th placed teams from all groups will go in to the Plate Competition. The tournament on day two, will adopt an FA Cup style format i.e. a sudden death knock-out competition. The first round of **ALL** day two tournaments will be drawn on the Saturday evening of WorldNET10 teams will then progress through their section of the draw. All entries **must** be accompanied by a completed entry form and full payment of the entry fee as advertised to IFA members via the IFAWorldNET yahoo group. Entry fees are non refundable. The organisers reserve the right to refuse entries which they deem not to be competent.

2. veterans

The veterans competition will consists of four groups of four and will follow the established WorldNET format. Draw details for Sunday are listed below. N.B. Veterans teams must have at least ten players over the age of 30 on the pitch at all times– be prepared to prove your age!

3. tied groups

In the event of teams being tied on points at the end of the Group stages on day one the following procedure will be used:

- i) Winner of the game between tied teams (in case of a 3 or 4 way tie-breaker this criterion does not apply)
- ii) Goals difference (goals scored minus goal against)
- iii) Most goals scored
- iv) Least disciplinary points accrued (1 point for a yellow card, 2 points for a red card)
- v) If this fails to resolve the tie then it will be settled by the toss of a coin.

N.B. In the event of one team qualifying as a result of the above tie-breakers, but where this leaves two or three teams still tied, we return to point ii) again to split the remaining tied teams, and repeat the process until all league positions are settled.

4. draw

a) The Saturday night draw for the Cup competition is as follows:

- * The 16 group winners will be placed in one hat
- * The 16 group runners up will be placed in one hat
- * A random draw from each hat will take place until all teams are matched
- * No team will be drawn against a team it played in the group stages

b) The Saturday night draw for the Plate competition is as follows:

- * The 16 3rd place teams will be placed in one hat
- * The 16 4th place teams will be placed in one hat
- * A random draw from each hat will take place until all teams are matched
- * No team will be drawn against a team it played in the group stages

c) The draw for day two of the veterans competition is pre-determined by group finishing position on day one – ***please see day two match schedule for further details.***

5. exceptions

All rules for both events will be as per the Football Association, with the following exceptions:

- * Games will be 15 minutes each way with a two minute break between halves.
- * In the event of a draw in the knock-out stages, a ten-minute "Golden Goal" period will be played (no half time).
- * If the teams are still level at the end of this period the tie will be decided on penalties.
- * Teams will be allowed a maximum of five substitutions per game.
- * Players who have previously been taken off can be brought back on during the same game, although this will count towards the maximum of five substitutions.
- * Players may only play in the tournament they commence playing in on Saturday 24th July. Where there is an "A" and a "B" team players may only play for the team they commence playing in on Saturday 24th July. Any team failing to abide by this rule will be excluded from the tournament.

6. disciplinary measures

In the unlikely event of any player receiving a sending off or two bookings, they will miss their teams' next game. Bookings or sendings-off from the first day are not carried forward to the next day.

7. squad registrations

This section is to be updated shortly

8. administration

Each group on the first day of the tournament will have a 'Group Co-ordinator'. During the knock-out stages on day two their job title will suddenly change to 'Pitch Co-ordinator'! They will be expected to fulfil the following duties:

- * Make sure that both teams and the officials for each match are ready to start games on time.
- * You will be provided with a full match schedule and the names of officials for all your games.
- * Liaise with the referee at the end of each game, to confirm the score, and take note of any bookings or sendings off.
- * Report scores, bookings and sendings off, to the IFA Central Admin Desk at the first available opportunity.
- * Inform Sunday's Knock-out stage winners where and when their next match is being played
- * Liaise with the Senior Group Co-ordinator on all other matters.

9. disclaimer

As per official IFA policy, WorldNET10 has not been registered with the FA at Lancaster Gate and hence is not an FA sanctioned tournament. We, the IFA, must make it clear that all players compete in the tournament at their own risk. Football can result in injuries, sometimes serious, but the organisers of WorldNET10 cannot be held

responsible for any injuries incurred during the tournament. Likewise, they cannot be held responsible for any theft or damage to belongings or motor vehicles whilst at the venue.

Teams who reach their respective finals could end up playing a total of five to six hours football, and because the tournament is in July it could be in relatively high temperatures. It is the responsibility of each player to ensure that they are fit and well enough to participate and do not enter the tournament with any medical condition, which could endanger their health. All matches will be played on grass; it is up to players to decide on suitable footwear.

10. it's only a game

Certain supporters have old rivalries with other teams supporters. If anyone wishes to display their feelings towards another team, they should do this by scoring a spectacular hat trick rather than a Cantonaesque flying drop kick! Likewise, with the increase in the number of competing teams and the advent of the second day Plate and Vets competition, even the most competitive of sides will have little or no excuse for not giving **ALL** their players, a fair "crack of the whip" in terms of playing time. We all know don't we boys and girls, that it's not the winning that counts, but the taking part!!

11. officials

Since the emphasis of the tournament is on fun, players shall respect ALL decisions made by officials even though they may be obviously wrong! Referees and Assistant Referees will be instructed to punish acts of dissent severely, and those teams that persistently offend in this manner will face an immediate IFA Disciplinary Hearing. Physical and persistent verbal abuse of officials by players or members of a team's organisation will not be tolerated under any circumstances, and will result in the offending team's instant expulsion from the tournament .

12. racism, racist abuse and pro-diversity

Any incidence of racism or racist abuse will not be tolerated under any circumstances. It is EVERY participant's duty to ensure that the tournament and its participants are not subject to any form of racism or racist abuse. We gladly welcome all participants regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation. Any participant or team that fails to extend this welcome to their fellow participants is not welcome at this tournament or any of our other activities.

13. circulation of rules

N.B. Would Team Managers/Organisers please make sure that these rules are circulated promptly to all potential participants at WorldNET 10 and reply to me, R.Goodair@brad.ac.uk, stating that this has been done. Your email header should read:

WorldNET 10 – Rules Circulated - Team Name.

14. website and email group

i) The tournament website will be www.worldnet.org.uk Full results will be displayed there as quickly as possible after the event. All relevant tournament announcements will be displayed there in the run up to the event as well as on the IFAWorldNET yahoo group.

ii) All teams must have at least 1 participating member at all times on the IFAWorldNET yahoo group which is accessible via:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/IFAWorldNET/>

15. addendum

The official entry form and the notes attached to it will form an integral part of these rules.

f) The IFA Challenge Cup 2010 Rules

The IFA Challenge Cup rules are the same as for the IFA League

The final will held be at WorldNET 2010 on Friday the 23rd July 2010 at the University Of Leeds' Bodington Hall. Kick off will be 6.00pm and finalists agree to be on site by 5.30pm. There will be a formal presentation at 8pm, immediately after the final, in the upstairs Hall of the Main Building. Winners and Runners Up are expected to attend this presentation.

The initial draw will be on a regional basis with the option to opt out of a regional game in round one and to take pot luck (this could mean a trip to The Granite City or Sarfend) **All subsequent draws will be random** so teams may have to travel long distances.

The 5 options for regions in the initial draw are: Scotland, North of England, The Midlands, South and Random. If you do not state an option on your entry form you will be placed in the random pot.

Match deadlines are as follows:

First Round: December 31st 2009

Second Round: February 28th 2010

Quarter Finals: April 30th 2010

Semi Finals: July 1st 2010 (neutral venue)

The home team must provide a qualified referee

All teams shall complete an entry form and pay the entry fee of £20. The entry form and these rules will be available as word documents and PDFs file on the Yahoo Group website: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/IFAWorldNET/>. Entry Fees are not refundable under any circumstances.

The games must be played on grass (an end of season dispensation for the use of artificial pitches will be considered by the Rules Committee) unless both teams agree otherwise.

With consent of both teams, the away team can act as the home team - this is

to allow those who like to travel to do so.

The minimum number of players is eight to qualify as a game. Any team turning up with less than 8 (or indeed not turning up), 30 minutes after the tie is due to start, will automatically forfeit the tie. You can then play a mixed friendly.

The game must be the full 90 minutes, unless both teams agree. We would say minimum is 35 minutes each way with both teams agreeing.

No extra-time will be played – matches drawn at the final whistle go straight to penalties. This applies for the whole tournament. This is to ensure that the teams have time to get to senior matches after the games.

Games will be played on a weekend, unless both teams agree.

Anyone failing to complete their fixtures runs the risk of being excluded from the following years' competition in the scenario that we have odd numbers of entrants.

All teams are expected to resolve their disputes amicably and in a grown-up manner. Should this not be the case, reluctantly the Rules Committee will step in. The Rules Committee decisions on disputes are final – i.e. not up for debate!

Ver 4.00 Barbaraville March 29th 2010