



THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION OF IRELAND YOUTH CHALLENGE CUP COMPETITION RULES 2022.23

TITLE

1. The Football Association of Ireland Youth Challenge Cup is an annual Cup competition owned, run, and promoted by the Football Association of Ireland.
2. The FAI Youth Challenge Cup shall be otherwise known as “The FAI Youth Cup” and/or any title designation granted under any sponsorship agreement.

DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

Any definitions not contained here under but contained within the FAI Rules may be relied upon in interpreting these Rules.

The following terms and expressions shall have the following meanings in the context of these Competition Rules:

“*Club*” means a Club which is competing in the Competition.

“*Competition*” means the FAI Youth Challenge Cup.

“*days*” shall exclude Saturdays, Sundays, and Public Holidays, unless otherwise specified.

“*FAI Board*” means the Board of Management of the FAI as described in FAI Rules.

“*FAI Rules*” means the Rules and Regulations for the time being of the FAI.

“*Competition Manager*” means the Competitions Manager as appointed by the FAI Board.

“*Area Co-Ordinator*” means the Area Co-Ordinator of the FAI Youth Cup as appointed by the Competitions Manager.

“*FIFA*” means the Federation of International Football Associations.

“*Home Club*” means the Club which has been drawn first in the original tie.

“*Away Club*” means the Club which has been drawn second in the original tie.

“*Host Club*” means the club owning or leasing a ground on which a competition match is being played. The Host Club may not necessarily be one of the participating teams.

“*Match Delegate*” means a person appointed to report on a fixture on matters outside of the remit of the Match Officials.

“*Match Official*” means Referees and Assistant Referees and includes Reserve Officials and Fourth Officials.

“*Official*” means any official, technical official, director, secretary, servant or representative of an affiliated body or competition.

“*Rules*” means these Competition Rules as may be amended by the Competitions Manager from time to time.

Words importing the singular only, include the plural and vice versa and words importing the masculine only, include the feminine, neuter and vice versa. In the event of a conflict or divergence between these Rules and the FAI Rules, the FAI Rules shall prevail.

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

3. The Competition Manager

- 3.1. The management and control of the Competition shall be the responsibility of the Competitions Manager.
- 3.2. The Competitions Manager may delegate some or all of their powers or functions to the Area Manager or a Sub Committee, as appointed by the Competitions Manager, who shall be responsible for the day-to-day control and management of the Competition.

4. Competitions Manager Powers and Responsibilities

The Competitions Manager shall:

- 4.1. approve the composition of the Competition.
- 4.2. ensure the draw for each round of the Competition is correctly supervised.
- 4.3. agree the programme of fixtures.
- 4.4. appoint sub-committees as required.
- 4.5. deal with all disciplinary matters arising within the Competition.
- 4.6. oversee the proper distribution of any distributable fund.
- 4.7. have the power to withhold or withdraw the Cup and medals.
- 4.8. have power to alter the FAI Youth Cup Rules, but in no case shall they do so until after the Final Tie in any competition has been played.
- 4.9. make decisions in relation to the Competition which shall be final unless otherwise provided for by these Rules.

5. Competition Manager

The Competition Manager shall:

- 5.1. conduct all such administration as is necessary for the management of the Competition.
- 5.2. deal with all disciplinary proceedings involving the affairs of the Competition as required.
- 5.3. take such steps, impose such restrictions, penalties, sanctions and take such measures as determined against any person or Club, without prejudice to any disciplinary proceedings and where not otherwise provided for in these Rules.
- 5.4. request the FAI to withhold or deduct money from any monies due to a club from the FAI for the purpose of payment of a fine or fines.
- 5.5. have the power to delegate functions to administrative staff within the Competitions Department.

6. Clubs

- 6.1. Clubs participating in the Competition accept and agree to be bound by these Rules and the FAI Rules.
- 6.2. Clubs confirm that they are responsible for ensuring that their players, directors, members, officials, representatives, and employees involved in any way in the Club's participation in the Competition are made aware of and are bound by these Rules and the FAI Rules.

- 6.3. Each Club entering the competition must fully complete the Competition Entry Form and forward same with the relevant entry fee to the Competition Manager on or before the closing date in each season with the following particulars:
- 6.3.1. The name, address, contact number and an active e-mail address of the Club Secretary. All correspondence, including disciplinary matters in relation to the FAI Youth Cup will be forwarded to the club secretary by e-mail and it is the responsibility of the club secretary to obtain the information from the e-mail address provided on the form.
 - 6.3.2. The name of the League which the team is affiliated and in which division they play.
 - 6.3.3. Name and full Address of Ground.
 - 6.3.4. Whether ground is public or private.
 - 6.3.5. Their preferred day and kick off time
 - 6.3.6. Details of Club Playing kit including 1st and 2nd choice colours.
 - 6.3.7. Confirmation that the Club has adequate insurance in place to participate in the Competition.
- 6.4. Clubs changing Secretary or Secretary changing their address must notify the Competition Manager immediately.

7. Notice and Service of documents

- 7.1. The Competition Manager will conduct correspondence and all correspondence including that relating to disciplinary matters shall be done through email unless otherwise specified.
- 7.2. The Competition Manager shall address all correspondence to the Club's Secretary.
- 7.3. Any notices or communications which are required to be given shall, unless otherwise expressly provided, be given in writing, and may be delivered personally or sent by email, or post.
- 7.4. Any notice or communication shall be deemed to have been served if delivered personally or emailed at the time of delivery or, if sent by post, 48 hours after same was posted.

COMPETITION AND REGISTRATIONS

8. Drawing of Clubs

- 8.1. The Competitions Manager may determine the format of the competition on an annual basis in advance of the first fixture.
- 8.2. The Clubs which are in each instance first drawn in the ballot shall have choice of ground up to and including the semi-finals.
- 8.3. The lots shall be drawn, and the Competition matches played as the Competitions Manager may determine, and immediately after each drawing the Competition Manager shall send a copy of the draw by e-mail to all the relevant clubs and leagues.
- 8.4. The Competitions Manager may draw subsequent round or rounds before the winners of the previous rounds have been declared, and the winners according to such draw shall compete against each other.
- 8.5. The Competitions Manager shall have power to exempt any number of Clubs from any number of rounds, and byes may be given so that eight (8) Clubs shall compete in the quarter-finals.
- 8.6. In the event of a Club getting a bye in any of the drawings, the Competitions Manager shall put in place arrangements that the said club shall not receive any further byes.
- 8.7. In the event that the ground nominated by the team drawn at home in any given tie not being approved by the Competitions Manager, then the Competitions Manager shall have the power, at

their discretion, to nominate an alternative ground or to direct that the match be played at the ground of the team drawn second in the tie provided that the said ground shall also be approved by the Competitions Manager and that both Clubs are given a minimum of seventy-two (72) hours' notice of the venue and time of the match.

- 8.8. Postponed or abandoned matches are subject to the proviso hereinafter contained, shall be replayed within and not later than fourteen (14) days and in the event of further postponement within and not later than seven (7) days.
- 8.9. In the event of a match being postponed or not being completed due to an unplayable ground, the match shall be re-fixed at the opponents ground where the same system shall apply. This will also apply if a game is commenced but not concluded because of ground or weather conditions.

9. Fixtures

- 9.1. It is the responsibility of the League Fixture Secretary of the home team to make contact with the League Fixture Secretary of the away team to confirm fixture details at least ten (10) days (Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays included) prior to the fixture being due to be played.
- 9.2. All fixtures will be set by the Competitions Manager, taking into account the day and time provided upon registration for the competition by the team drawn at home in that round, on or before the round date as set by the Competitions Manager.
- 9.3. Where a team is travelling more than eighty (80) miles / one hundred & thirty (130) kilometers one way (from their ground address to the fixture venue) to fulfil a fixture, said fixture should not kick off before 2pm unless by mutual agreement between both clubs and the relevant Area Co-Ordinator.
- 9.4. Where a team is travelling more than eighty (80) miles / one hundred & thirty (130) kilometers one way (from their ground address to the fixture venue) to fulfil a fixture, said fixture should take place on a Saturday or Sunday (determined by the norm in the home team's league) unless by mutual agreement between both clubs and the relevant Area Co-Ordinator.
- 9.5. Fixtures must then be confirmed with the relevant Competition Manager/Area Co-Ordinator at least fourteen (14) days (Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays included) prior to the fixture taking place.
- 9.6. The home team secretary must contact the away team secretary to confirm details of a fixture five (5) days prior to the fixture taking place.
- 9.7. Clubs must notify the Competition Manager, the Referee, the opposing team and the relevant Area Co-Ordinator in the event of a change of venue or kick off time.
- 9.8. FAI Youth Cup matches shall take precedence over local league and provincial fixtures. No cancellations shall be permitted without the express permission of the Competitions Manager.
- 9.9. Competing teams in all ties must be given a minimum of seventy-two (72) hours' notice of a decision to arrange a particular match in question. Notification by fax/e-mail shall be deemed sufficient notification.
- 9.10. A club with two (2) players or one (1) player if a goalkeeper engaged in an international match for an official Republic of Ireland team may apply for a postponement of the arranged FAI Youth Cup fixture.
- 9.11. Application for permission to postpone such arranged fixture must be made to the Competitions Manager within three (3) days after the selection for the representative team and the notification of the application for a postponement must also be sent to the opposing club within the same time. All applications will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. No postponements will be granted for trials or training.

- 9.12. The Competitions Manager, at their discretion shall have the power to control any fixture in the FAI Youth Cup at any stage of the competition if the Competitions Manager deems it necessary.

10. Playing of Matches

- 10.1. The duration of each match shall be ninety (90) minutes.
- 10.2. The match must be started at the time appointed by the Competitions Manager, but no protest will be upheld for late starting, unless the Competitions Manager are satisfied that the result of the match was affected thereby.
- 10.3. In all rounds including the final, if the match is drawn after ninety (90) minutes then two (2) periods of ten (10) minutes extra-time shall be played.
- 10.4. If the match is drawn after extra-time, then the match shall be decided by kicks from the Penalty spot as per FIFA Penalty kicks rule.
- 10.5. The Referee shall have power to allow lost time for stoppages, his decision thereon to be final.
- 10.6. The Secretary or an authorized official of each contesting team shall prior to the commencement of the match, fill in the referee's team sheet in block letters showing the first name and surname of the players and substitutes including shirt numbers, participating in the match.
- 10.7. In all matches, the names of the substitutes must be given to the Referee prior to the start of the match on the appropriate team sheets. Substitutes not so named may not take part in the match.
- 10.8. A club may at its discretion nominate seven (7) substitutes to the referee before the match commences. They may use any five (5) substitute players at any time during a match and any period of extra time, except to replace a player who has been expelled from the game by the referee.

11. Grounds

- 11.1. A ground for Youth Cup ties (Final excepted) shall be understood to mean a ground of sufficient length and width, properly delineated and marked off according to Law 1 of the Laws of the Game. Grounds properly marked, goal posts, etc., supplied by a public authority shall be deemed to comply with this rule.
- 11.2. All grounds must have separate dressing rooms for each team and a separate dressing room for Referees. All grounds should have shower facilities for both teams and for Referees.
- 11.3. In the Final Tie the ground shall be chosen by the Competitions Manager and shall be of Preliminary Category Standard. In addition to arranging the venue at which the Final shall be played, the Competitions Manager shall decide the date and day of the week on which the Final shall be played.
- 11.4. Goal-nets must be used in all Cup Ties. Any objection to ground, goal-posts, goal-nets or ball must be lodged in writing by the Club Secretary on the day with the Referee before the game is started, and the Referee shall have the power to have such objection made right before the game starts.
- 11.5. The Referee or his representative shall inspect the ground at least one hour prior to the scheduled time of kick-off and shall immediately give his decision as to fitness of the ground for play.
- 11.6. Where one of the teams is travelling a distance of more than eighty (80) miles / one hundred & thirty (130) kilometers, and there is a doubt about the fitness of the ground for play, a pitch inspection must be arranged by the home team and the results communicated to the away team at least six (6) hours before the match in question. Where one of the teams is travelling a distance of more than one hundred and twenty (120) miles / two hundred (200) kilometers, and there is a doubt about the fitness of the ground for play, a pitch inspection must be arranged by the home team and the results communicated to the away team at least twenty four (24) hours before the match in question.

- 11.7. Where an away team incurs expenses travelling to a cup tie (more than 80 miles / 130 kilometers each way) where the pitch is deemed unplayable, or the match is postponed for reasons outside of the control of the away team, the said away team may submit a list of its expenses to the Competitions Manager and the Competitions Manager shall decide what expenses, if any, are to be reimbursed to the away team.
- 11.8. In the event that a ground may be unplayable, it shall be the responsibility of the home club to contact the Referee in time for the inspection to take place.
- 11.9. In the event of a match being played on an FAI approved Artificial Turf Surface the home team must give the away team at least three (3) days' notice of the possibility of same and six (6) hours' notice of confirmation of same to allow for managers/players to be informed.

12. Registered Colours

- 12.1. In all rounds, except the final, players in each competing team must wear the registered colours of the Club for which they are playing, except when opposing teams have similar colours, in which case the home club shall change their strip.
- 12.2. In the final the away team shall change strip in the event of a clash of colours.
- 12.3. The colours of the Club shall be taken to be the colour of the shirt or jersey, which must have a number.
- 12.4. A goalkeeper must wear a shirt or sweater of different colour, provided that said shirt or sweater is of a colour distinctive from that of his opponents and the Match Officials.
- 12.5. Referees shall have the power to instruct a player to change a shirt or sweater if they consider the colours not sufficiently distinctive from that of his opponents. Referees shall have power to deal with any player refusing to comply with their instructions in this respect.

13. Eligibility

- 13.1. Players must have been born in the year 2004 or later in order to be eligible to compete in this competition.
- 13.2. All teams competing in the FAI Youth Cup shall only play players who are properly registered to play in the competition. Players must be properly registered to play for the team competing in this competition.
- 13.3. In all cases, irrespective of whether the player in question is an amateur or professional the player in order to be eligible to play in an FAI Youth Cup match, must be properly registered with his League as a member of the club for which he proposes to compete for at least one (1) calendar day between the date of receipt and stamping of the registration form by the League and the day of a match.
- 13.4. All players must be registered with their affiliated League.
- 13.5. There shall not be a limit on the number of players a club may register to play in the FAI Youth Cup.
- 13.6. In the event of a conflict between the registration rules of any of the Leagues and Divisional Associations on the one hand and the registration rules as contained in the FAI Rule Book, the FAI Rules shall prevail.
- 13.7. Only one (1) team per club shall be permitted to participate in the FAI Youth Cup.
- 13.8. Clubs entering a team in the FAI Youth Cup must have a registered team competing in an affiliated league.

- 13.9. A Youth team playing in an U19 League whose affiliated League do not have a Youth Division/League may enter the FAI Youth Cup provided all their registered players meet the required eligibility criteria for the FAI Youth Cup.
- 13.10. While the players in each team may be changed from match to match, no individual shall play for more than one club in this Competition during any one season.
- 13.11. Any player who is/was registered to play in the National League Premier Division, National League First Division, National U19 League, National U17 League or National U15 League at any stage after 31st August during the season of this competition is not eligible to participate in this competition.

14. Qualification

- 14.1. If the Competitions Manager has any doubt as to the qualification of any player taking part in the Competition, they shall have the power to call upon such player, or the Club to which he belongs and/or for which he played, to prove he is qualified according to the FAI Youth Cup Rules.
- 14.2. If a player takes part in a match despite being ineligible, his team shall be sanctioned by forfeiting the match. Teams sanctioned with a forfeit are considered to have lost the match by 0-3. If the goal difference at the end of the match in question is greater than 3-0, the result on the pitch is upheld.
- 14.3. Clubs making a frivolous objection will be liable to removal from the Competition or a fine to be decided by the Competitions Manager.
- 14.4. All leagues with clubs competing in the FAI Youth Cup must allow other clubs competing in the competition permission to inspect their registration as per FAI Rule.

15. Protests & Objections

- 15.1. A protest must be sent by registered post addressed to the Competition Manager accompanied by a Bank Draft or Postal Order for €200 made payable to the Football Association of Ireland.
- 15.2. Protests must be sent within four (4) days of the relevant fixture being played.
- 15.3. An exact copy of the protest must also be sent by simultaneous registered post to the club protested against, within four (4) days after the cause of the protest.
- 15.4. A period of four (4) days after the receipt of protest by the Competition Manager shall be afforded the club protested against to lodge a cross protest by registered post which must be accompanied by a Bank Draft or Postal Order for €200 made payable to the Football Association of Ireland.
- 15.5. The protest and copy sent to other club must be accompanied by documentation outlining the reasons for the protest and, if necessary, supporting the protest.
- 15.6. Once the Competition Manager is satisfied that the Protest is in order, he shall create a Protest Committee which shall consist of at least three (3) persons, one of whom shall be nominated as Protest Committee Chairperson.
- 15.7. The Protest Committee shall convene within ten days of the protest being ruled in order by the Competition Manager unless exceptional circumstances deem this not possible.
- 15.8. The decision of the Protest Committee can be appealed to the FAI Appeal Committee as per the FAI Rules.
- 15.9. In the event of a protest not being sustained, the protest fee shall be forfeited.
- 15.10. Outside the protest time, the Competitions Manager may investigate an objection surrounding the eligibility of a player if the objection is lodged in writing by the Secretary of a club or league, or if an objection is raised by the Competition Manager.

15.11. Any Club making a frivolous protest or objection will be liable to removal from the Competition and/or a fine to be decided by the Competitions Manager.

16. Admission Charges

16.1. In all rounds up to and including the Semi-Finals, the home team may charge an entry fee of no more than €5 per adult.

16.2. The Competitions Manager shall set the admission prices for the Final match.

17. Clubs Refusing or Failing to Play a Fixture

17.1. Any Club refusing or failing to play the Club against which it has been drawn on the date fixed by the Competitions Manager may be adjudged to have lost the match and a fine may be imposed if the Competitions Manager deem it appropriate.

17.2. Any club intending to not fulfil a fixture must give notice to the Competition Manager, the Area Co-Ordinator and the Secretary of the opposing club, such notice to be received at least four (4) days before the time fixed for the kick off. Any club failing to conform to this rule shall be dealt with by the Competitions Manager who shall have the power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses or to take such action as they may deem expedient.

Covid-19

17.3. In order to ensure the timely completion of the competition during the Covid Pandemic, any club failing to fulfil a fixture due to Covid-19 shall be deemed to have forfeited the fixture.

18. Trophies and Medals

18.1. The FAI shall present the Cup to the winning Club who shall be responsible for its return to the FAI at least two (2) months prior to the following FAI Youth Cup Final in good order and condition.

18.2. Should the Cup be destroyed or damaged by fire or other accident whilst under the care or in custody of the Club, the Club shall refund to the FAI the amount of its replacement value or the cost of thorough repair.

18.3. Should the Cup be lost or destroyed from any other cause whilst under the care or in the custody of the Club, the Club shall, in addition to any other penalty which the FAI may impose, pay to the FAI a sum which, in the opinion of the Competitions Manager, accurately reflects the full reinstatement value of the FAI Youth Cup.

18.4. In addition to the Cup the FAI shall present Medals to the winners of the Final Tie.

18.5. The FAI shall also present Medals to the runners-up.

18.6. The cost of medals shall be borne by the FAI.

18.7. A total of 25 medals shall be awarded to the players and Technical Team of each club.

19. Match Officials

19.1. Match Officials appointed to act in FAI Youth Cup Matches up to and including the semi-finals are entitled to fees and expenses as laid down for the current FAI / ISRS Referees Fees & Expenses Agreement.

19.2. In the Final, Match Officials shall be awarded medals and expenses only.

- 19.3. The Competitions Manager shall have power to vary these fees and make extra allowances in exceptional cases. The Match Referee or his representative shall have the sole responsibility for the inspection of the playing surface and shall decide on the playability of same.
- 19.4. In all rounds up to and including the Round of 16 the Match Officials shall be appointed by the local Appointments Officer of the League of the home club.
- 19.5. At least three (3) Match Officials (Referee & 2 Assistants) shall be appointed to all FAI Youth Cup fixtures from the Quarter Final rounds. All appointments from the Quarter Final rounds on shall be made by the FAI Referees Department.
- 19.6. In all rounds up to and including the Semi Finals of the competition referees fees and expenses shall be paid by the home team.
- 19.7. Referees Team Sheets must be returned within **24 hours** of the completion of the match **by email** to CupCompetitions@fai.ie

20. Match Delegate

A match delegate may be appointed to Competition matches. The role and duties of the match delegate shall be decided by the FAI Stadia & Security Group and may be amended from time to time.

21. Division of Gate Receipts

- 21.1. In the Semi Final Ties, the receipts shall be divided as follows: The FAI shall take 10% of the gross gate and the remainder shall be divided 60% to the home club hosting the semi-final tie on behalf of the FAI and 40% to the opponent club. The home club shall be responsible for the payment of all expenses as approved by the Competitions Manager.
- 21.2. The Final tie will be controlled by the Football Association of Ireland.
- 21.3. In the Final Tie the receipts shall be divided as follows:
- 21.4. After all expenses have been paid, the FAI shall take 25%, the remaining 75% to be equally divided between the two competing Clubs.

DISCIPLINARY

Disciplinary matters are dealt with by a sub-committee appointed by the Competitions Manager.

22. General

- 22.1. All Disciplinary matters relating to the Competition shall be under the remit of the Competitions Manager.
- 22.2. The Competition Manager shall report all complaints or alleged breaches of FAI Rules.
- 22.3. Disciplinary decisions may be communicated electronically, by fax or by registered post. An electronic or facsimile delivery report or registered post receipt is sufficient evidence that a decision has been properly notified.

23. Fines

- 23.1. In addition to the imposition of a minimum one match suspension, expulsions will attract a minimum €30 fine in fixtures played in the Competition. The Competitions Manager shall have power to impose any additional sanction it deems fit, and the terms of the sanction shall be determined by the Competitions Manager and set out in its decision.
- 23.2. All fines imposed by the Competitions Manager must be paid within ten (10) days of the notification being sent.

- 23.3. Non-payment of fines within the specified time period shall be an offence and may result in the imposition of an additional fine by the Competitions Manager.
- 23.4. In the event that a Club fails to make payment of a fine, the FAI may withhold, or set off against the amount owed, any monies payable to the Clubs by the FAI.

24. Commercial Rights

- 24.1. The FAI owns all the commercial rights in relation to the FAI Youth Cup, relating to television, broadcasting rights, specific title, and peripheral sponsorship rights. As a condition of participation in the FAI Youth Cup, competing clubs shall acknowledge the FAI's ownership of such rights.
- 24.2. The FAI may exploit the commercial rights relating to the FAI Youth Cup itself. Alternatively, at its discretion, the FAI may from time to time assign certain of those rights such as, for example, perimeter advertising space and concessions at match venues to participating clubs to exploit directly, subject to the approval of the FAI, which approval shall not be unreasonably withheld, provided that such commercial rights shall not be in conflict with any of the FAI sponsorships.
- 24.3. Participating clubs shall provide full support to the FAI in its exploitation of the commercial rights relating to the FAI Youth Cup and shall not themselves exploit any commercial rights other than those rights that have been specifically assigned to them by the FAI.
- 24.4. In the event of a clash of colours in the Final the team designated as the away team must wear their second strip. Finalists must wear the relevant logos if required.
- 24.5. In all rounds of the FAI Youth Cup, except the final, Clubs shall provide and use Umbro footballs. Failure to use Umbro footballs may result in disciplinary action being taken against the offending club but shall not be the subject of protest or appeal.

25. Breach of Commercial Rights

- 25.1. Prior written consent shall always be sought from the Competitions Manager for any derogation from the commercial rules.
- 25.2. A breach of any Commercial Rule shall be subject to fine as decided by the Competitions Manager save where derogation has been granted in writing by the Competitions Manager.

