

M.U.F.A. Youth Cup

Competition Rules 2026

Name / Annual Competition

1. The Cup shall be called the "Mid Ulster Youth Cup". The competition for the cup shall be annual, and open to all registered youth clubs of the Association with clubs subject to the approval of the Council.

Application will only be considered from Clubs in membership of recognised Leagues.

Competition Organiser

2. The entire control and management of the competition shall be vested in the Mid Ulster Football Association.

Substitutes

3. (a) A Club may at its discretion, may use five substitute players at any time in any tie, except to replace players who have been expelled by the referee. The substitutions can only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the referee has given permission.
- (b) Only five substitutions by each side will be permitted in any tie and a maximum of seven substitute players may be nominated prior to the commencement of the tie.
- (c) **Exceptionally, a sixth substitute may take part exclusively during extra time in all rounds of the competition.**

Qualification of Players

4. To be eligible to play in the Competition players must be registered to play for their Club in their respective league competitions.

No player shall be eligible to take part who is over 17 years of age prior to the 1st day of January (*1 January 2027 for 26/27*) during the season in which the competition commences. (For *26/27*, a player born on or after 1 January 2009 shall be eligible to take part in the competition)

Clubs must satisfy themselves as to the eligibility of their players. Any Club playing an ineligible player may be removed from the Competition, and be debarred from competing during the ensuing three seasons, and the Committee shall have power to suspend any offending player or official, and shall impose a fine not exceeding £25.00 for each offending player played, and may withhold the Cup and mementos if they are satisfied that such Club has violated the Rules during the course of the Competition.

Limitations of Qualifications

5. No player shall be eligible to play in this Competition for more than one Club in the same season.

Notwithstanding anything in any rule, if the Committee has any doubt at any time and whether arising out of a protest or otherwise as to the qualification of any player taking part in the competition, they shall have power to call upon such player, and/or the Club to which he belongs, or for which he played, to prove that he is qualified according to the rules, and failing satisfactory proof, they shall disqualify such player and shall remove the club from the competition, and impose such other penalty they may think fit.

In such circumstances the Committee shall have the power to reinstate the defeated team to the competition in the event that the following round has not yet taken place.

- ~~6. The secretary or other responsible official of each competing club shall enter the names of players and team officials and their functions taking part in each match (including the name of the nominated substitutes) for the team line up via Comet FMS 30 minutes prior to kick-off, ensuring the accuracy of the information supplied. Any club not completing the team line up in the prescribed manner shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £25. It shall be at the Council's discretion whether or not such club should be allowed to remain in the competition~~

Completion of Team Lineup

6. (a) Each club shall complete their official team line up by including the names of players and Team officials and their functions taking part in each match (including the name of the nominated substitutes) and confirm the line-up via Comet FMS **30** minutes prior to kick-off for matches from qualifying rounds one to the quarter finals and 1 hour prior to kick-off in the semi-finals and final tie.
- (b) Players' names must correspond with the numbers assigned on the official team line up. The Club Comet user shall be considered to verify the accuracy of the information provided on the team line up via Comet FMS.
- (c) Any club failing to provide such documentation by the stipulated deadlines will be fined in the sum of £10 for each offence.
- (d) The match Referee will not permit the match to commence until both teams have confirmed their line ups and will report any such offence to the Competition Secretary.
- (e) Once confirmed, line ups cannot be amended/alterd unless permission is granted by the Match Referee. Failure to comply will result in disciplinary action being taken against Club(s) concerned. Any change made to the players indicated on the match sheet as forming the starting 11 after the team line ups have been confirmed without providing evidence of an unexpected physical incapacity is considered as a substitution, and the number of substitutions available to the team during the match is reduced accordingly. The replaced player may take no further part in the match.

- (f) Teams who cause a kick-off to be delayed by late confirmation of line-ups will be fined an additional £20.
- (g) In the event that a Club official is deemed guilty of falsifying a team line up on the Comet Football Management system, the Council shall have powers to deal with such a matter as they deem appropriate.
- (h) Should the Football Management system be unavailable on match days, The Referee will require teams to complete Match cards, subject to confirmation from the Competition Secretary.

Replacement of Players on the Team Line Up due to Unexpected Physical Capacity

- 7. After the team line ups have been completed and submitted, and if the match has not yet kicked off, the following shall apply:
 - (a) If any of the first eleven players named on the team line up are not able to start the match due to unexpected physical incapacity, they can be replaced only by any of the five (5) substitutes named on the confirmed team line up. The substitute(s) in question can then be replaced by a player(s) not named on the initial team line up, so that the quota of substitutes is not reduced. During the match, three (3) players can still be substituted. The replaced player(s) must be removed from the team line up and not be available for selection for this fixture.
 - (b) If any of the five (5) substitutes named on the team line up are not able to be fielded due to unexpected physical incapacity, they can be replaced by any player not named on the confirmed team line up, so that the quota of substitutes is not reduced. During the match, three (3) players can still be substituted. The replaced player(s) must be removed from the team line up and not be available for selection for this fixture.
 - (c) Any amendments to the team sheet in accordance with points a) and b) above must be communicated to the opposing team manager by one of the Match Officials as soon as possible prior to the commencement of the match

Extra Time / Kicks from the Penalty Mark

- 8. In the event of any match in the Competition resulting in a draw, extra time of 10 minutes each way shall be played. In the event of the score being equal at the end of this period of extra time the tie will be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International F.A. Board.

Method of Drawing

- 9. The teams which are in each instance first drawn in the ballot and known as the “Home Team” shall play on the ground registered with the Association. The second drawn team shall be known as the “Away Team”. If the registered ground is available it will not be necessary for the visiting team, or the Secretary of the Association to receive further notification, but if the match is being transferred to another ground it will be the responsibility of the team drawn at home to notify both their opponents and the secretary of the Association ~~within reasonable time of any such transfer~~ not later than the Friday of the week previous to the date of the match, failing which the team shall be dismissed from the competition.

Dressing accommodation including shower facilities must be provided by the Home club.

- (a) In the event of a match not taking place on the date arranged owing to the ground being declared unplayable by the referee and/or in the case of public grounds by the Local Authorities, the teams shall forthwith arrange to play the following Saturday.
- (b) In the event of the match not taking place on the second Saturday due to circumstances as 10 (e) the clubs will arrange to play the following Saturday on the ground of the “Away team” and if not played on this day due to weather conditions arrangements must be made to play at the same location of the following Saturday.
- (c) In the event of the match not taking place on the second attempt at the ground of the original “Away team” the tie will revert from the following Saturday to alternate weeks at the “Home” and “Away” grounds.
- (d) In all cases the Secretary of the Team on whose ground a match was to be played must immediately advise the Secretary of the Association and their opponents of any postponement.

Clubs failing to play

- 10. Any Club refusing or failing to play the Club against which it has been drawn on the date fixed by the Committee, and without sufficient reasons for so doing shall be adjudged to have lost the match and be otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine. In case of disputed ties the Committee shall decide dates and venues. Should either Club refuse to compete, such Club shall be removed from the Competition, and otherwise dealt with as the Committee may determine. Clubs disregarding this Rule will be liable to be dealt with as the Committee consider appropriate.

Protests

- 11. All questions of eligibility, qualifications of competitors, or interpretation of Rules or Laws of the game shall be referred to the Committee, whose decision shall be final, subject always to the right of any Club or player to appeal to the Association, in accordance with the Articles of Association.

- (a) Protests must be received by the Secretary of the Association **by Special Delivery** bearing postmark within two days after the cause of the protest, accompanied by a deposit of £50.00, which shall be forfeited in all cases where the protest has not been sustained.

Copies must be sent to the Club protested against

- (b) A copy of the protest must also be sent **by Special Delivery** bearing post-mark within two days after the cause of the protest to the Club protested against. No protests relative to the playing pitch or appurtenances of the game

shall be entertained by the Committee, unless a complaint has been lodged with the referee in writing before the commencement of the match.

~~10. In case of any player being found ineligible the Club playing him must be adjudged to have lost the match. Any Club leaving the ground before the expiration of the game must be adjudged to have lost the match, and shall be liable to be dealt with by the Committee for misconduct.~~

~~11. If the Committee has any doubt as to the qualification of any player competing in this competition it shall have power to call upon such player, or the club to which he belongs or for which he played, to prove to the satisfaction of the Committee that he is properly qualified according to the Rules, and failing such satisfactory proof, the Committee shall have power to disqualify such player, and remove such Club from the Competition.~~

Referee and Assistant Referees

12. The competing Clubs in all but the ~~last two rounds of ties~~ **Final** shall appoint the Assistant Referees, unless otherwise arranged by the Committee.

the all In all the matches the M.U.F.A. will appoint the Referee, who shall have power to dispense with the Services of Assistant Referees in case he finds one or other giving decisions at variance with facts and appoint substitutes. In but the last two rounds of ties the Club on whose ground is played shall pay the Referee's charges.

In exceptional circumstances, and in consideration of the integrity of the competition, both Clubs may agree to recommend to the Match Official an early cessation of a match provided that no less than 60 minutes has been played.

If no referee is appointed, or arrives to officiate at a match the practice of the two teams tossing for the referee should not occur and the match should not take place.

Players must wear Registered Colours

13. The 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 team on whose ground the match is played shall change theirs.

Notice of Scratching

14. Any club intending to scratch must give notice to the Secretary of this Association and to the Secretary of the Opposing Club, such notice to be received at least four days before the date of the match. Any Club failing to conform to this Rule shall be dealt with by the Committee who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses incurred and take such action as they may deem expedient.

Final

15. The venues for the ~~Semi-Finals and~~ Final ~~Ties~~ shall be decided by the Committee, and shall be neutral. However, if the competing Clubs are in agreement the Committee may permit the match to be played on the ground of either of the Clubs concerned.

Medals or Badges

16. In addition to the cup the Association may present medals to the winners of the final tie and may also present medals or other suitable mementoes to the defeated finalists.

Division of Receipts

17. In all Competition matches, with the exception of the ~~semi-finals and~~ Final, the Club on whose ground the match is played shall take the receipts and pay all expenses. ~~In case the expenses in semi-finals exceed the receipts, the deficit shall be taken from the final tie receipts, same being considered expenses of match.~~

~~18. The Committee shall, except as to returns by Clubs, have power to alter these Rules, but in no case shall they do so until after the Final Tie in any year shall have been played.~~

~~19. The Committee shall have power to deal with offending Club or Club's, player or players, official or officials, as they may consider appropriate, and to deal with any matter not provided for in these Rules.~~

Powers of Council / Alterations to Rules

- 18 (a) The Council shall have power to deal with any other matter not provided for in these rules.
(b) In all cases under these Rules Sunday shall not be taken into account in computing the time required in any matter arising out of these Rules.
(c) These rules shall not be altered, annulled, or added to, until after the Final Tie has been played.

Special Note: Sundays shall not be reckoned in the computation of time in these Rules.