

MID-ULSTER FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

IVAN MARSHALL MID-ULSTER SHIELD

COMPETITION RULES 2026

Name

- 1 The Shield shall be called the "Ivan Marshall Mid-Ulster Shield."

Annual Competition

- 2 The Competition shall be annual and open to all junior member clubs of the Association and such guest clubs as the Mid Ulster FA Council may invite.

Entries Etc.

- 3 Entries must be made on the [Mid Ulster FA Portal](#) via **Comet FMS** not later than the 1st September of each year, and must be accompanied by an entry fee decided annually by the Council.

The following must be clearly stated

- (i) Whether ground is shared and, if so, with whom and who has primacy
- (ii) Whether the ground is public or private
- (iii) Situation of ground
- (iv) Colours of Club shirts, shorts and socks
- (v) Name, Address and email address of Secretary

Only one team from each club shall be permitted to compete.

Ineligible Players

- 4 An ineligible player shall be a player who has:

- (a) Should a player take part in any Cup Tie Match for a Senior or Intermediate Cup, **at National or Divisional level**, he may not compete for the Mid Ulster Shield in the same season, except in the case of Junior teams, three members of which may play for the Senior or Intermediate teams of the same Club. However, no such player/s shall play in more than two matches collectively in Senior Cup or Intermediate Cup competition.
- (b) In addition, the following shall be ineligible to compete for the Mid Ulster Shield.
 - i) Any player who has played in the current or previous three seasons in a Senior International match.
 - ii) Any player who in the current or previous season has played in the Final Tie of any Senior Competition.
 - iii) Any player who in the current or previous season has played in the final tie of any Intermediate status competition, **at National or Divisional level**, except a player who has played in such final as a member of a Junior Club.
 - iv) Any player who has played in more than 12 competitive matches for NIFL Senior Clubs during the current and previous season.

- v) Any player who has taken part in more than six competitive matches for Senior or Intermediate Clubs collectively during the current season.
- vi) A professional player shall not be allowed to take part in the Mid Ulster Shield.

For the purpose of this rule Intermediate Clubs are those playing in any Intermediate League.

Qualification of Players

- 5 Players will be eligible to play in the Mid Ulster Shield provided that on the date of the tie they are eligible to play for their own club in its League Competition.

No player who is registered by his club after 31st March shall be eligible to participate in that same season.

Limitations of Qualifications

- 6 No individual shall be allowed to play for more than one competing Team.

Notwithstanding anything in any Rule, if the Mid Ulster FA Council in the case of the Ivan Marshall Shield, have 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 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 as they may think fit.

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

Competition Format

- 7 The names of the Clubs approved for the competition shall be placed in one lot, or lots, as the Council may determine.

Byes may be given

- 8 The Council 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 as in the previous round. The Council shall have power to exempt any number of Clubs from any number of rounds, and byes may be given so that four Clubs shall compete in the Semi-Finals.

Draw after Bye

- 9 In the event of a club getting a bye in any of the drawings, the Council at the subsequent drawing, shall first draw a Club to play against it from the lot, the two shall again be put in the ballot-box and again drawn, and the club first out of the box shall have choice of ground (subject to the conditions detailed in rule 10): but the Council may so arrange that four clubs compete in the Semi-Finals.

Method of Drawing

- 10 (a) The lots shall be drawn and Competition matches played as the Council may determine, and immediately after each drawing the Secretary shall intimate to

each of the clubs drawn the name and colours of the Club it is drawn against and the date upon which the tie is to be played.

- (b) The Council may draw subsequent round or rounds before the winners of the previous rounds have been declared. The Council shall have power to exempt any number of Clubs from any number of rounds, and byes may be given so that the required number of clubs is obtained.
- (c) In the event of a club getting a bye in any of the drawings, the Council at the subsequent drawing, shall first draw a Club to play against it from the lot, the two shall again be put in the ballot-box and again drawn, and the club first drawn out shall have choice of ground, but the Council may so arrange that four clubs compete in the semi-finals.
- (d) 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 (unless
- (e) 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.
- (f) 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 on the following Saturday.
- (g) 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.
- (h) If necessary the Council will permit the playing of the match at either club's registered or alternative ground if agreed in writing and confirmed to the Association Secretary by both clubs at least two days prior to the match.
- (i) 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. Any club failing to conform to this rule shall be dealt with by the Council who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses or take such action as they may deem expedient.

Semi-finals and Final

- 11 The venue for the Semi-Finals and Final shall be chosen by the Council. The Council may permit the match or matches to be played at the registered home venue of either of the participating teams.

Notice of Scratching

- 12 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 Council who shall have power to compel the offending Club to pay such expenses or take such action as they may deem expedient.

Clubs failing to play

- 13 Any club refusing or failing to play the club against which it has been drawn on the date fixed by the Council and without sufficient reasons for doing so, shall be adjudged to have lost the match, and otherwise dealt with as the Council may determine.

Players must wear Registered Colours

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- a) 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 Club on whose ground the match is played shall change. In all other cases the Council shall decide which team shall change. The colours of the Club shall be taken to be the colours of the shirt or jersey as registered with the Association. 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.
- b) In a tie played on a neutral ground, where opposing teams have similar colours, both teams shall change unless they are agreed that only one do so.
- c) Referees shall have power to instruct a player to change a shirt or sweater if he considers the colour not quite distinctive from that of his opponents, and the Referee shall have power to deal with any player refusing to comply with his instructions.

Completion of Team Line Up

- 15 ~~Teams must submit their team line ups and team officials and their functions taking part in each match (including the name of the nominated substitutes) on the Comet Games Management system at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled kick-off time. Teams who fail to submit line ups before the required time will be subject to a fine not exceeding £10.~~

~~———— 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.~~

~~———— Once confirmed, line ups cannot be amended/alterd unless permission is granted by the Match Referee. Failure to do so will result in disciplinary action being taken against Club(s) concerned.~~

~~———— It is mandatory to advise opponents of any such changes.~~

~~———— Teams who cause a kick-off to be delayed by late confirmation of line ups will be fined an additional £20.~~

~~In the event that a Club official is deemed guilty of falsifying a team line up on the Comet Games Management system, the Council shall have powers to deal with such a matter as they deem appropriate.~~

~~———— Should the Games Management system be unavailable on match days, The Referee will require teams to complete Match cards, subject to confirmation from the Competition Secretary.~~

- 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

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

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, **five (5)** 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, **five (5)** 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.
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Substitutes

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- ~~a) A club may, at its discretion, use three substitute players at any time in any match except to replace a player who has been suspended from the game by the referee. The substitutions shall only be made when play is stopped for any reason and the referee has given permission.~~
- ~~b) The maximum number of substitutes permitted to be nominated by each side is five and must be nominated prior to the commencement of the match.~~
- ~~c) Exceptionally, a fourth substitute may take part exclusively during extra time in all rounds of the competition.~~

17

- a) A club may at its discretion use five substitute players at any time in any tie, except to replace a player who has been expelled from the game by the referee. The substitutions can only be made when play is stopped, and the referee has given permission. Substitute players shall be nominated prior to the commencement of the tie.
- b) Clubs may nominate a maximum of five substitute players, from which five substitutes shall be permitted.
- c) Substitutions may only be made on at most three occasions during the game. Exceptionally, one additional substitution stoppage window will be granted to each club should a match proceed to extra time.
- d) Substitutions made during half-time, between the end of normal playing time and the start of extra time, and at half-time during extra time do not reduce the number of stoppages in play that can be used.

Duration of Match / Extra Time

18

- a) The duration of each match, shall be 90 minutes. The match must be started at the time appointed by the Council, but no protest will be upheld for late starting, unless the Council is satisfied that the result of the match was affected by such delay.
- b) The Referee shall have power to allow extra time for stoppages, his decision thereon to be final.
- c) If a match has been stopped by the referee, before the completion of the time specified, for any reason stated in Law 5 of the Laws of the Game, the Committee shall have power to deal with the matter as they may determine.

d) Kicks from the Penalty Mark

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 shall be decided by the taking of kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by International FA Board

Abandoned match

- 19 If a match has been stopped by the referee, before the completion of the time specified, for any reason stated in Law 5 of the Laws of the Game, the Committee shall have power to order such match to be replayed in full or, to allow result of the match at the time of such stoppage to stand or to dismiss or debar one or both teams from the competition if considered appropriate.

Referee and Assistant Referees

- 20 The competing clubs, in all but the Semi-Finals and Final shall appoint the Assistant Referees. The Council shall appoint the Referee. The Council may also appoint a 4th Official if deemed necessary. 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.

Referees fees shall be fixed annually by the Council.

Protests

- 21 (a) Protests and appeals must be received by the Secretary of the Association per **Special Delivery Letter** bearing post mark within four days after the cause of protest or appeal accompanied by a deposit of ~~£50.00~~ £60.

Copies must be sent to the Club protested against

- 21 (b) A copy of the protest or appeal must also be sent by **Special Delivery Letter** to the Club protested against. The certificate of posting of such special delivery must bear date stamp within four days after the cause of the protest or appeal and shall be sole proof of date of posting.

Grounds

- 22 (a) Ground must be that on which the Club normally play league fixtures.
- (b) Dressing accommodation, including adequate shower facilities must be provided by the Home club. It is expected that the changing rooms shall be adjacent to the pitch, however if this is not the case the Home club must inform the Away team and the M.U.F.A. secretary prior to the date of the match.
- (c) Matches will be permitted to be played on artificial turf providing that the pitch is at least FIFA Quality standard. Clubs playing their home matches on artificial turf must notify their opponents and the Association by email. Any team not adhering to this rule will be dealt with as the Council consider appropriate.
- (d) The home club shall be responsible at all times for the safety of the players, officials and spectators.
- (e) Any match expenses incurred in staging a game in any round prior to the semi-finals and final will be the responsibility of the home club that was first drawn in the ballot.

Objection to Ground

- 23** Any objection to ground, goal-posts or ball must be lodged in writing by the Captain for the day with the Referee before the game has started, and the Referee shall have power to have such objections made right before the game starts.

Referee to inspect Ground

- 24** The Referee shall inspect the ground prior to kick off and shall immediately give his decision as to fitness of ground for play.

Agreement for Cup

- 25** When the winning Club shall have been declared, the Secretary of the Association shall hand the Cup to its representatives on receiving a document to the following effect, and subscribed by three persons whose names shall be previously submitted to, and approved of by the Council of the Association: –
We, A.B., Chairman of the X.Y.Z. Club, and C.D. and E.F., members of and representing the said Club, which has now been declared to have won the Mid-Ulster Football Association Challenge Cup, and the said Cup having been delivered to us by J.K., Secretary of said Association, do hereby, on behalf of said Club, and individually and collectively engage to return the same to the said J.K., Secretary of the Association for the time being one month before the final in like good order and condition No party, other than the Secretary of the Association, is authorised to have engraving or similar works undertaken on the trophy.

Division of Receipts

- 26** In all Competition matches, with the exception of the Semi-final and Final Ties, the Club on whose ground the match is played shall take the receipts and pay all expenses including costs pertaining to match referee.

Division of Receipts: Semi-Finals and Final

- 27** In each Semi-Final and the Final the Competing clubs and the Council shall equally share gate receipts after deduction of all match expenses.

Medals or Badges

- 28** The Association will present medals or other mementoes to the winners and runners - up in the competition each season.

Powers of Council / Alterations to Rules

- 29**
- (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.