

BIRKENHEAD SUNDAY FOOTBALL LEAGUE BYELAWS – Season 2023-24

SCOR numbers where shown refer to the FA Standard Code Rule to which the bye law refers or is derived from.

1. ENTRY FEE, SUBSCRIPTION & DEPOSIT (SCOR 4)

a. Any Club failing to discharge all fees, subscriptions, outstanding fines, and any other monies owed will not be allowed to vote at the Annual General Meeting. Any person proposed for the Management Committee by a Club in breach of this Rule shall have their nomination declared invalid, likewise any Rule or Rule alteration proposed or seconded by such a Club will be invalid.

b. Lottery - The Birkenhead Sunday League Lottery forms part of the League's financial structure and as such it is a mandatory requirement for all member clubs to participate.

The Lottery will be run over the season from September – April i.e., 8 months and the subscription is £10 per month per club or individual.

club/Everyone is allocated a number and at the League Management Committee Meeting each month a draw is made for prizes as follows: 1st £150, 2nd £75, 3rd £50 and 4th £25.

Any club falling behind on payments and owing £20 or more will be subject to League sanction resulting in suspension of fixtures until the deficit is paid.

2. MANAGEMENT, NOMINATION, ELECTION (SCOR 5)

a. The Competition may elect Honorary Life-Members and Honorary Vice-Presidents.

Nominations for Honorary Life-Membership and Honorary Vice-Presidents shall be made by the Management Committee. Honorary Life-Members and Honorary Vice-Presidents may attend Management Committee meetings but shall not have the power to vote unless co-opted onto the Management Committee

b. The Management Committee shall appoint the Chairman, and Vice-Chairman from amongst its members; shall have the power to appoint Life Vice-Presidents will be considered for outstanding service to the League. All Life Membership Appointments to be confirmed at the Annual General Meeting.

c. The President, Hon General Secretary and Treasurer shall be appointed Trustees of the assets and effects of the Birkenhead Sunday Football League and are also authorised to do all necessary acts in connection therewith, upon instructions of, and pursuant to any resolutions of the League Management Committee.

3. POWERS OF MANAGEMENT (SCOR 6)

a. The Management Committee may appoint annually, non-elected members to any sub-committee deemed relevant. Any appointment in this manner shall be considered a Member of the Management Committee and have voting rights.

b. In the event of an emergency, a sub-committee, consisting of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman and Secretary, shall have the power to give a ruling, subject to subsequent ratification by the Management Committee.

c. The Management Committee without prejudice to its existing right, powers and duties in connection with the management of the business of the Competition shall have full authority at their discretion to negotiate and enter into for and on behalf of each Club any agreements relating to sponsorship and/or advertising and Clubs shall comply with all the obligations on their part which may be contained or referred to in any such agreement

d. Clubs, Officials, or Individuals committing a breach of this Rule shall be liable to have such fines doubled, if at the end of a further 7 days payment has not been received by the Discipline Secretary or Treasurer, Fixtures will be suspended.

4. CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP or WITHDRAWAL OF A CLUB (SCOR 11)

A Club shall not be allowed to withdraw any or all teams from the Competition after the Annual General Meeting for the following Season.

Any Club infringing this Rule shall be liable to a fine not exceeding £250.00 per team.

5. EXCLUSION OF CLUBS, MISCONDUCT BY CLUBS, OFFICIALS & PLAYERS, PROBATIONARY CLUBS (SCOR 12)

a. Any Club or team failing to complete all its fixtures in any season may (unless the conditions are beyond their control, or the accredited delegates present at the Annual General meeting decide otherwise by a majority of two-thirds of the votes cast) be debarred from membership the following season.

b. Newly admitted Clubs will be given a probationary membership of a minimum of one season. Probationary membership shall carry the benefits of full membership except that if in the opinion of the Management Committee, any Probationary Club is not suitable for any reason for continued membership then full membership will not be offered the following season. The power to exclude a Probationary Club shall be the sole right of the Management Committee without recourse to the Clubs in membership or at the Annual General Meeting.

c. Clubs whose conduct is deemed by the Management Committee to be unacceptable may be given a probationary membership during the current and / or the following season.

d. new clubs entering membership and clubs who are promoted to a higher Division, will be required to pay an 'additional' deposit of £100.00 to ensure that they fulfil fixtures for the season. This will be returned to the new club or promoted club upon completion 75% of the fixtures for that season.

6. ALTERATIONS TO RULES OR BYE-LAWS (SCOR 14)

All alterations to rules proposed by Clubs must be duly seconded by another Club. The Management Committee may also propose changes to rules / bye laws, these will be despatched to members clubs at least 14 days prior to any AGM /SGM.

7. INSURANCE (SCOR 16)

Clubs participating in this Competition must produce a valid copy of their Club Insurance Cover for Players and Officials as required by The FA and above Competition for the playing season. This evidence must be produced by the Pre-Season General Meeting. Clubs who fail to produce such evidence may incur a fine and have fixtures suspended until insurance is confirmed.

8. PROTESTS & COMPLAINTS (SCOR 17)

a. Appeals or protests to the Management Committee must be accompanied by a fee of £30.00 per appeal which is returned to the protesting / appealing club if the appeal / protest is successful.

b. Subsequent appeals to a sub-committee decision shall be heard by the full management committee excluding those members that sat on the original hearing (excl. League Secretary who will take notes of proceedings and take no part thereof in the outcome)

9. QUALIFICATION OF PLAYERS (SCOR 18)

Registration

- a. Clubs will register with the League, a minimum of fourteen players, 21 days prior to first fixture date for the ensuing season. Failure to do so will result in a £20 fine.
- b. Clubs may only register a maximum of thirty (30) players once the maximum is reached a club must deregister a player to register a new player.
- c. Where a Club cancels the registration of a player for any reason whatsoever, the Club must notify the Registration Secretary immediately.
- d. The Management Committee shall have the power to suspend new player registrations as per rule 18 A, during a season from a specified date.

Transfers

- a. Following initial registration players are freely allowed one (1) subsequent transfer during the season. Any second and subsequent transfers are subject to approval from the Management Committee.
- b. Any club seeking to transfer a player from another club may serve 7 days' notice as follows.
 - E mail the player's current club advising 7 days notice of transfer
 - No further dialogue between clubs is allowed during the 7-day period.
 - It is the decision of the player to accept the transfer after the 7-day period has elapsed.
- b. Subject to FA rule (2C) in the case of more than one player from one club desiring to transfer to the same club the following must be adhered to:

28 (TWENTY-EIGHT) days must elapse between transfers unless the second player has made himself available for selection on three consecutive occasions and has not been selected: then he may transfer within seven days all disputes under this rule and subject to FA rule (2C) the management committee's decision will be final on this Rule.

Eligibility

- a. In all circumstances where a Club has fielded an unregistered or ineligible player in a BSL league competition the Management Committee will use its discretion to award the points available from the match in question to the opponents.
- b. In the event the Club has fielded an unregistered or ineligible player in a BSL cup competition then the Management Committee will use its discretion to remove the Club from the competition and their opponents shall go forward to the next round.
In both cases the Club may also be fined and/or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- c. In both above cases the Club may also be fined and/or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Management Committee.
- d. Any Club found guilty of playing a player suspended sine die by The Football Association or any County Football Association or whose registration has been refused, cancelled, or suspended by the Management Committee as per Rule 18(G) shall be fined £100 and may be expelled from the League subject to Rule 12(A).
- e. To be eligible to play in a BSL domestic cup final a player must have been registered and eligible to play in the previous semi final.

Representative Fixtures

The League shall have the power to call upon any such player(s) for the purpose of Representative games.

10. CLUB COLOURS, CLUB NAME (SCOR 19)

a. The Secretary of the Competition may request shirts to be submitted if complaints are received as to lack of distinguishing colours and the Management Committee may refuse to permit any shirts or shorts as they think fit.

All players must wear b. Shirt numbers.

c. Shirts, shorts and socks must conform and not be of assorted colours.

11. PLAYING SEASON, CONDITIONS OF PLAY, KICK-OFF TIMES, POSTPONEMENTS, SUBSTITUTES (SCOR 20)

a. The Secretary/Fixture Secretary shall have the power to change any fixture during the season to suit the overall interests of the Competition.

b. Requests for 'Closed' dates will only be considered if notice has been given to the Fixture Secretary as follows:

- Open-age teams 14 days' minimum. Requests for Closed Dates requested after fixtures have been issued will be refused.
- No more than four 'Closed' dates (per team) will be granted in any one season (excluding major events) and 'Closed' dates will not be granted on pre-arranged Cup dates.

c. Clubs did not allocate a match on the published fixture schedule have an 'Open' date and **MUST** remain available to play up to 8pm on the Wednesday preceding a Sunday and the same time interval prior to any midweek matches.

d. The consumption of alcohol and/or the taking of glasses on or near to the viewing areas is prohibited on the grounds of all Clubs in membership of this Competition.

e. Any Club failing to commence at the appointed kick-off time shall be fined a sum not exceeding £25.00 or be otherwise dealt with as the Management Committee may determine.

f. Every Club shall play its best available qualified team in all matches in the Competition.

g. Shirts numbers must correspond with those on the team sheet (Premier Division) submitted to the Referee. Failure to comply will result in the offending Club being fined £25.00.

h. Prior to all game teams and officials shall, where possible, conduct the "Respect" handshake.

i. The Management Committee shall have the power to change the requirement as per rule 20 E (i) to play home & away fixtures so teams will play each other once.

Fixtures will be played at a venue to be determined by the Secretary and/or Fixture Secretary.

j. Matchday Observers may attend matches on behalf of the League to foster good will between clubs and match officials. They shall have powers to observe matches prior to and after the actual playing of the game and complete an appropriate observation report on each participating club, which will be scrutinised by the Discipline Committee.

A 'fines' tariff will be introduced for those clubs who are observed to have not followed guidance and rules of the League. Observers will not be involved in the actual playing time of games (i.e., 90 minutes) this will be the sole responsibility of the match official(s).

k. The Management Committee (or sub-committee thereof subject to full endorsement by the full committee) shall have the powers to suspend fixtures for clubs, for time periods up to and including the end of the playing season, who in the opinion of the subcommittee and full Management committee, have endangered the reputation of the League by their actions on / off the field of play. Clubs in accordance with League rules may appeal such suspensions to a sub committee consisting of members of the management committee who took no part in the original decision. Appeals fees are costed at £30.00 per appeal if the club(s) are unsuccessful in any appeal.

l. Suitable ground facilities are defined as those with separate changing facilities for teams and referees complete with toilets and with both hot & cold running water showers.

In all BSL league and cup competitions clubs can name up to 5 (five) substitutes all of whom may partake in the fixture. Roll on roll off substitutions are NOT permitted.

12. REPORTING RESULTS (SCOR 21)

- a. Both Home and Away Club officials must report to the Results Secretary on the date of the fixture any postponement or abandonment of the fixture. Failure to do so will result in a fine of £20.00.
- b. Clubs shall provide to the opposition fully completed team sheets of players taking part in the match including substitutes at least 10 minutes prior to the kick off.

Failure to do so will result in a fine of £20.00.

13. DETERMINING CHAMPIONSHIP (SCOR 22)

A Club may be promoted directly into a division considered appropriate by the Management Committee.

14. MATCH OFFICIALS (SCOR 23)

- a. Match Officials fee's will be determined at the Annual General Meeting
- b. Match Officials shall attend their appointments at least fifteen (15) minutes prior to kick-off.
Failure to do so will be reported to the Referee's Secretary and be dealt with by the Management Committee.
- c. The Management Committee may, if they consider it desirable, or upon application by the two competing Clubs, appoint Assistant Referees, if available, to any match. Where Assistant Referees are not appointed each team shall provide a Club Assistant Referee.
- d. In the event of adverse weather where there is a doubt to the fitness of the pitch an inspection must take place. Pitch inspections should take place at least two hours before the advertised kick-off time and in time to prevent the opposing team and match official(s) from travelling.
- e. In the event of a postponement, the home team should notify the Referees Secretary, Fixture Secretary, opposing team and Match Official(s) immediately.
- f. A Referee or Assistant Referee failing to comply with the administration standards of the Competition and/or failing to confirm acceptance of appointments with the Referees Secretary may be reported to the Association with which he is registered.

15. DISCIPLINE

Clubs who accumulate more than twenty-five penalty points will be asked to attend a discipline commission and will subject of a sanction or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the commission. Any club who incurs a doubling of any fine, the League will impose an administration charge of £10.00.

16. COMMUNICATION

- a. The primary form of communication between the Management Committee and the member Club Secretaries is electronic mail (e mail). Clubs are required to nominate at least one officer responsible for receiving the communication.
- b. All Club Secretaries are to provide the League with at least one bona fide e mail address to receive fixtures, fixture amendments and other relevant information.
- c. It will be the responsibility of the recipient to cascade the information to the relevant personnel within the member clubs e.g., team managers, coaches and CWO's, to ensure continuity is maintained.
- d. It will be the responsibility of the member clubs to ensure the recipient of the communication has fully operational IT equipment to receive electronic mail.
- f. It will be the responsibility of the member clubs to advise the league immediately should their designated e mail address/s become defective so that a temporary alternative, e.g., post, telephone, can be utilised until the fault is rectified.
- g. The League's website and app are updated as and when the information becomes available and may be used for reference.

17. RULES BINDING ON CLUBS

Each Member Club shall be deemed to have given its assent to the foregoing Rules and Bye Laws and agreed to abide by the decisions of the Management Committee.

18. FINES. Fines for breaches of the following bye laws are outlined below:

Observers: Technical Areas/Dugouts:

Notification: Appointed match officials not notified by home club by telephone or in writing of the date / time / venue of the game at least 2 days before its scheduled fixture date:

- 1st offence -verbal warning
- Subsequent offences: £20.00 fine per breach.

Please note this bye law does NOT apply to late changes to match officials via the referee appointments officer.

Fines – General:

Failing to deal with correspondence of the League:

- 1st offence: verbal warning
- 2nd offence: £20.00 fine
- 3rd offence: £30.00 fine
- 4th offence: £40.00 fine
- 5th offence: fixtures suspended for 14 days with matches awarded to opposition or elimination if a cup tie.

Failing, without reasonable cause to pay the appointed match official(s) their match fees at the conclusion of the game:

- 1st offence: verbal warning
- 2nd offence: £20.00 fine
- 3rd offence: £30.00 fine
- 4th offence: £40.00 fine
- 5th offence: fixtures suspended for 14 days with matches awarded to opposition or elimination if a cup tie.

Failing to provide two suitable match balls (as reported by match officials):

- 1st offence -verbal warning
- Subsequent offences: £20.00 fine per breach.

Any teams who without reasonable cause fail to fulfil their scheduled fixture shall be (without reasonable cause) subject to:

- 1st offence: Verbal warning to club and points awarded (if less than 24 hours' notice is given, the full referee fee is payable by the offending team).
- 2nd offence: £50.00 fine and points awarded (if less than 24 hours' notice is given, the full referee fee is payable by the offending team).
- Subsequent offences: £50.00 fine and points awarded (if less than 24 hours' notice is given, the full referee fee is payable by the offending team).

Clubs failing to fulfil 3 or more fixtures shall be required to appear in front of the Management Committee, and their position in the league will be reviewed.

NB: Additional sanctions at the discretion of the discipline committee may be implemented along with a fine, which may also include up to and including deduction of points/ award of games/ suspension of fixtures/ removal from the competition.

BIRKENHEAD SUNDAY LEAGUE CUP COMPETITIONS

All domestic cup competitions within the League i.e., Tony Houlihan Memorial Challenge Cup, David Tacy Cup, the various Divisional cups, and occasional Invitation cups may have the format changed or cancelled without notice should the League Fixtures so demand.

TONY HOULIHAN MEMORIAL CHALLENGE CUP - RULES

1. This Competition shall be known as the Birkenhead Sunday Football League Tony Houlihan Memorial Challenge Cup, and all Open Age Division clubs must enter.
2. The Management of the Competition shall be vested in the Management Committee of the Birkenhead Sunday Football League, the Rules of which shall apply generally.
3. Draw
 - a. Clubs shall be drawn in pairs, the first drawn in each pair to have choice of ground in rounds prior to semi-final, the expense for each match being borne by the Home Club
 - b. Premier Clubs shall be exempt to the 2nd round.
 - c. Clubs qualifying for the quarter-final stages of the Competition shall be exempt to the 3rd round of the following seasons Competitions.
4. In the case of a draw after 90 minutes the match will be decided on penalties,
5. If possible, semi-final ties shall be played on neutral grounds but if this is not convenient, the Management Committee may order the matches to be played on the grounds of one or other of the competing Clubs.
6. In all rounds of the Competition up to and including the Semi-Final, a player must be registered in the League Competition by 12 noon on Saturday before the conference date. In the Final tie, all players must have been eligible to play for the Club in the Semi-Final tie,
5. A Club playing an ineligible player(s) shall be struck from the Competition and their opponents shall go forward to the next round and may be fined and/or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Management Committee.
6. Prior to all ties, if so, requested by their opponents SEVEN days prior to the game, a Club must provide their opponents with a list containing the Full Christian and Surnames of those players eligible to take part in the match from which the team will be selected. Any Club failing to send such information THREE days prior to the match shall be liable to a fine of £10.00, this will not be grounds for a protest the result of the match.
7. A set of TWENTY medals or similar trophies shall be awarded to the winners and runners-up, funds permitting.
8. At the conclusion of the Final Tie the Memorial Challenge Cup shall be presented to the winners in accordance with the conditions stated in **SCOR 13** as sanctioned by Cheshire County Football Association.

NO PLAYER SHALL TAKE PART IN THIS COMPETITION WITH MORE THAN ONE CLUB IN THE SAME SEASON.

DAVID TACY CUP COMPETITION RULES (All Open Age Divisions except Premier Division)

1. The Competition shall be known as the Birkenhead Sunday Football League – David Tacy Cup
2. The Fixture Secretary will designate the competition format and club entry criteria to suit the number of clubs available prior to the start of each season.
3. The following Rules for the Memorial Challenge Cup will apply to the above David Tacy Cup Competition:
 - 2, 3a, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

BIRKENHEAD SUNDAY LEAGUE INVITATION CUP COMPETITION - RULES (Premier & First Division Clubs ONLY)

1. This cup competition will be introduced on an ad hoc basis to provide additional fixtures as required
2. The Competition shall be known as the Birkenhead Sunday Football League Invitation Cup
3. The Fixture Secretary will designate the competition format and club entry criteria to suit the number of clubs available prior to the start of each season.
4. The following Rules for the Memorial Challenge Cup will apply to the above Cup Competition:
 - 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

BIRKENHEAD SUNDAY LEAGUE JOEY GRIFFITHS INVITATION CUP COMPETITION - RULES (Second, Third & Fourth Division Clubs ONLY)

1. This cup competition will be introduced on an ad hoc basis to provide additional fixtures as required
2. The Competition shall be known as the Birkenhead Sunday Football League Joey Griffiths Invitation Cup
3. The Fixture Secretary will designate the competition format and club entry criteria to suit the number of clubs available prior to the start of each season.
4. The following Rules for the Memorial Challenge Cup will apply to the above Cup Competition:
 - 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

DIVISIONAL CUP COMPETITIONS - RULES

Veronica Conway Cup (Premier Division Clubs ONLY)

Frank Robinson Presidents Cup (First Division Clubs ONLY)

Tony Smith Memorial Trophy (Second Division Clubs ONLY)

Jimmy Core Memorial Cup (Third Division Clubs ONLY)

Cleveland Cup (Youth Division Clubs ONLY)

Stephen “Dixie” Dean Memorial Challenge Bowl (Youth Division Clubs ONLY)

Trafalgar Shield (Youth Division Clubs ONLY)

Cleveland Cup (Youth Division ONLY)

1. The Competition shall be known as the Birkenhead Sunday Football League - Veronica Conway Cup – Frank Robinson Presidents Cup - Tony Smith Cup - Jimmy Core Cup – Cleveland Cup - Stephen Dean Bowl - Trafalgar Shield – Cleveland Cup Competition as appropriate and all Clubs must enter as designated by their Divisional status.
2. The following Rules for the Memorial Challenge Cup will apply to the above Divisional Cup Competitions:
 - 2, 3a, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.

STEPHEN 'DIXIE' DEAN MEMORIAL CHALLENGE BOWL - RULES (YOUTH DIVISION ONLY)
TRAFALGAR SHIELD - RULES (YOUTH DIVISION ONLY)

1. The Competition shall be known as the Birkenhead Sunday Football League - Stephen Dean Bowl - Trafalgar Shield Competition as appropriate and all Youth Clubs must enter.
2. The first four placings for the Youth Division in the League Table on 31st January of the current season will determine the Semi-Finalists for the Stephen 'Dixie' Dean Memorial Challenge Bowl.
3. The Clubs finishing in positions 5/6/7/8 for the Youth Division in the League Table on 31st January of the current season will determine the Semi-Finalists for the Trafalgar Shield.
4. The following Rules for the Memorial Challenge Cup will apply to the above Divisional Cup Competitions:
 - **2, 3a, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.**

THE TERRY MURPHY MEMORIAL CUP & PLATE FIVE-A-SIDE COMPETITION – RULES (YOUTH DIVISION ONLY)

1. The Competition shall be known as the Birkenhead Sunday Football League Terry Murphy Memorial Cup/Plate Competition, to be competed for by Clubs in the Youth Division in the form of a Five-a-Side Competition.
2. A Registration Form shall be submitted to the General Secretary prior to commencement of the Competition. Each Club may, if spaces allow, have an 'A' and 'B' Team.
3. Teams will be drawn in groups and these group matches will be played on a League basis, the top TWO teams will qualify for a final's night consisting of EIGHT teams, who will then play to a finish on a straight knockout basis (losing quarter finalist will play in the Plate Competition).
4. To be eligible in this Competition, a player must be a bona-fide member of a Club, having been registered and played for his Club on at least one occasion in League Competition in the current season.
5. No player shall play in this Competition with more than ONE Club in the current season.
6. A team playing an ineligible player will be adjudged to have lost the game and the points will be awarded to their opponents.
7. Any team failing to fulfil a game without good reason shall be adjudged to have lost the game and the points will be awarded to their opponents.
8. Each team shall submit a list of FIVE players and THREE substitutes prior to the commencement of each game.
9. A set of EIGHT medals or similar trophies shall be awarded to the winners and runners-up in both Competitions.
10. When the Competition is played Pre-Season, to be eligible, players need to be registered with a Member Club.
11. All Clubs must produce player's League identity cards at the start of each session or produce them before their final game in that session. Failure to do so will result in a fine of not less than £5.00 and no more than £20.00 or shall be dealt with by the League Discipline Committee.