

# **GENERAL RULES FOR DIVISIONAL COMPETITIONS**

These rules will apply for all Divisions of the Association except where set out in rules relating to a specific Divisional or Cup competition.

## **1. Management**

- (a) The Divisions shall be governed in accordance with the Rules, Bye-Laws and Regulations of the Bermuda Football Association by the Competitions Committee or such other committees as the Executive Council of the Association from time to time may appoint.
- (b) The Competitions Committee shall meet as often as is necessary to conduct the business of the Divisions concerned.
- (c) All communications shall be addressed to the Administrative Office of the Association who shall conduct the correspondence of the Divisions and keep a record of its proceedings.
- (d) The Competitions Committee shall have powers to apply, act upon, and enforce the Rules of a Division and shall also have jurisdiction over all matters affecting a Division, including any not provided for by the rules.
- (e) All decisions of the Competitions Committee shall be binding subject to the rights of appeal to the Executive Council, except where provided for in these Rules or other Rules and Regulations of the Association.
- (f) All fines and charges shall be paid within twenty-one days of the date of notification of imposition (unless otherwise ordered).
- (g) Clubs, Officials or individuals committing a breach of these rules shall be liable to such penalties as the Executive Council may impose.
- (h) A Club having failed to comply with an order or instruction of the Executive Council or the Competitions Committee acting on its behalf within twenty-one days of receipt of notice of such order or within twenty-one days of an operative date specified in that order, shall not be allowed to play or take part in the business of the Division until the order has been complied with and a reason for the delay has been submitted to the Administrative Office, who shall forward it to the Executive Council for their adjudication.
- (i) Notwithstanding the forgoing the Executive Council or Competitions Committee acting on its behalf may request an earlier compliance of an order or instruction if it is satisfied that an earlier compliance is necessary

for the normal function of the Division and other competitions or activities of the Association.

**2. Conditions of Play/Times of Kick-Off/Postponements/Substitutes**

- (a) Fixtures shall be deemed as having been accepted unless the Association receives objections within fourteen days after Fixtures have been circulated or published.
- (b) All matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as published by the Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA).
- (c) Membership Organizations must take the necessary precautions to keep their grounds in playable condition. All matches shall be played on grounds deemed suitable by the Competitions Committee. If through any fault of the home team a match has to be postponed, cancelled, rescheduled or replayed, the Executive Council shall have the power to order the venue to be changed, award the points and a score of 3-0 in favor of the visiting team or make a ruling that is in the best interest of the competition.
- (d) The Executive Council shall have the power to decide whether a ground is suitable for matches in a Division and to order the Club concerned to play its fixtures on another ground.
- (e) Membership Organization shall be responsible for the taking of gate receipts for its entire home Divisional matches.
- (f) The maximum time to be played in the various Divisional matches of the Association shall be as follows:-
  - (1) All Senior Divisions.....90 minutes
  - (2) Women Division.....90 minutes
  - (3) Player Development Division.....90 minutes
  - (4) Masters Division.....90 minutes
- (g) The kick-off times shall be fixed by the Association. Any membership organization failing to commence at the appointed time shall be liable to be fined a fee or be otherwise dealt with as the Executive Council may determine.
- (h) Referees must order matches to commence at the appointed time if possible and must state the reason(s) for all late starts in their Match Report and advise the Coach of the offending team(s) of his intention to do so.

- (i) The home team must provide balls fit for play throughout the match and the referee must state in his Match Report the unsuitability of the match balls and must also notify the Coach of his intention to do so.
- (j) Every membership organization shall play its strongest available team(s) or player's in all matches. The intention of this Rule is not to interfere with normal team selection by membership organizations, but to prevent membership organizations from deliberately fielding a weakened team in order to unreasonably reserve players for another game or to boost the strength of another or lower team.

It is NOT intended that membership organization MUST field higher team players in lower teams when the higher team has no engagement. If in the opinion of the Executive Council the substance or spirit of the Rule is obviously being disregarded, the membership organization concerned may be called to account for its/their actions and shall be subject to such decisions as the Executive Council may determine despite the fact that the Rule governing the qualification of players has not been infringed.

- (k) Home and Away Matches shall be played. In the event a membership organization fails to keep its engagement, the Executive Council shall have the power to impose a fine, order the defaulting membership organization to pay any expenses incurred or otherwise deal with them at their discretion. But in all circumstances where a membership organization fails to keep its engagement the points and a score of 3-0 shall be awarded to the non-offending membership organization. In the event a match is unable to be played owing to the fault of no team, the match shall be ruled as tied and a score of 0-0 shall be recorded.
- (l) In cases where their grounds do not possess lighting suitable for the playing of night matches and in cases where the Association must schedule or reschedule a match for any reason, the membership organization shall at the time of registration, designate a field with lighting, on which such matches will be played if said field is available at the time required for the playing of the match. Should the membership organization fail to provide a night field venue at the time of the scheduled or rescheduled match then the match shall be defaulted by the membership organization with the points and a score of 3-0 awarded to the opposing team.
- (m) Notwithstanding the foregoing Home and Away provision - the Executive Council shall have the power to order a match to be played on a neutral ground or on the opponents ground if they are satisfied that such action is warranted by the circumstances.
- (n) In the event of a match not being played it shall be rescheduled on a date set by the Association.

- (o) In the event of a match being abandoned owing to causes over which neither club has control, the Competitions Committee shall review the causes of abandonment and make its ruling on the outcome of the match in accordance with the following:
  - (i) If a match is abandoned before the completion of the first half, during the half-time interval or up to 75 minutes of play the match shall be replayed in its entirety.
  - (ii) If a match is abandoned after 75 minutes the Committee shall rule only in cases where it is to the advantage of the Competition and shall record the score at the time of the abandonment as final. In all other cases, the match shall be replayed.
- (p) (i) In all cases where the Committee is satisfied that a game has been abandoned owing to the conduct of one team or membership organization or its/their members, fans, or any spectators attending the match they shall award the points and a score of 3-0 for the game to its opponents and take what other action they may deem necessary. In the event that the offending team is losing by a score that is greater than 3-0 at the time of the abandonment, the Committee shall record the score at the time of the abandonment.
- (ii) In cases where a game is abandoned owing to the conduct of both teams and/or membership organizations, its/their members, fans, or any spectators attending the match, the Executive Council shall take such action as they consider appropriate.
- (q) A Membership Organization may at its discretion and in accordance with the Laws of the Game and the permission granted by the Association use substitute players as follows (see Rules for Premier, First, Player Development and Women's Divisional League Competitions):

- (1) All Senior Men's Competitions.....3
- (2) Women's Division Competitions.....5\*
- (3) Player Development Division.....7\*
- (4) Masters Division.....7\*

*\*NOTE: During a Player Development League, Women and Masters Division match a team may make unlimited substitutions; however, a player cannot re-enter a game in the same half in which the player was substituted. Only three (3) substitutes are permitted during regulation time for all Cup games except all Player Development League, Women and Masters Division Cup Finals whereby the unlimited substitutions rule is applied. For the FA Cup, the Friendship Cup and the knock-out stages of*

*the Dudley Eve Trophy Competition, each team will be allowed a fourth substitute during the period of extra time.*

- (r) The referee need not be informed of the name(s) of the substitute(s) before the start of the match. All eligible substitutes must be recorded on the team sheet before the start of the match.
- (s) A player who has been selected, appointed, or named as a substitute before the start of or during a match but does not actually play in the game, shall be considered to have been in that game within the meaning of the Rules governing the Qualification of Players of the Association.
- (t) *Players and coaches must be registered members of the participating teams, and their registration must be in accordance with the Regulations Governing the Qualification of Players (Domestic Competitions) and the Qualification of Coaches (in accordance with criteria established by the Player Development Committee), prior to any match in which they participate.*

### **3. Report Forms - Fines**

- (a) Each membership organization must submit the appropriate Field Operator and Home or Away Team Representative Form to the Match Commissioner or Referee upon his or her arrival to the match. In all cases, these Forms must be submitted prior to the start of the match.
- (b) The Referee and or Match Commissioner must submit all Match Forms & documents stated in 3(a) above within 48 hours of completing the match or earlier in case of serious incidents. A \$5 penalty will be imposed for match reports not submitted within 72 hours of the completion of the match. Each subsequent day that the match report is not submitted will result in an additional \$5 penalty per day.

### **4. Championship 'Deciding' Matches - Promotion and Regulation.**

- (a) All Divisional League competitions shall be decided by points with the team gaining the most points in their respective Division at the conclusion of the League Schedule shall be adjudged the Champion. Three points shall be awarded for a win and one point for a draw.
- (b) In the event of two or more teams being equal on points for any position in any of the Divisional League standings at the close of the Competition then goal difference shall decide the positions in the standings. Should that not break the deadlock then the most goals scored shall be used to decide the

positions in the standings. Should a deadlock still persist then the head-to-head scores from the games played between the teams tied in the Division (home & away) with the team having the better record being awarded the higher placing in the League standings. Should a tie remain then the drawing of lots shall decide which membership organization is awarded the higher placing in the League Table.

- (c) Automatic **relegation and** promotion shall be applied for the last two teams in the Premier Division **and first two teams** in the First Division, **respectively**, except as provided for hereunder.
  - (i) If two or more teams withdraw from any one Division after their fixtures have commenced and their vacancies not filled during the season then no team in that Division shall be automatically relegated to the lower Division.
  - (ii) Vacancies caused by the retirement of a team or by the withdrawal of a membership organization from the Division may be filled by the Executive Council at their discretion prior to the commencement of the Leagues.
- (d) In the event of a membership organization not completing 75 per cent of its fixtures for the season, all points obtained by or recorded against such defaulting Club shall be expunged from the League table.
- (e) Where a membership organization has completed 75 per cent of its fixtures the points for any games against the defaulting membership organization shall be recorded as final and all remaining fixtures shall be defaulted by the membership organization with the points and a score of 3-0 awarded to the opposing team

## **5. Registration, Entry and Withdrawal of Membership Organizations**

- (a) Any Club entering a team in Association Competitions must register a minimum of 18 players per team.
- (b) Every Membership Organization must notify the Administrative Office of the Association on or before the annual Club Registration deadline of its intention to continue or withdraw from any League.
- (c) Membership Organizations shall not be allowed to withdraw any of its teams from the League after the publication of fixtures during the current year. Any membership organization infringing this Rule shall be liable to a fine and such other action as determined by the Executive Council.

## **6. Failure to Play and Abandonment**

Any team that defaults three (3) matches during the season will be banned from participating in any further competitions relating to the division in which the matches were defaulted for the remainder of the season.

**7. Protest, Appeals and Deposits**

- (a) All questions of eligibility, qualifications of players or interpretations of the rules, except where stated in these rules or any other rules or regulations of the Association, shall be referred to the Executive Council or a Committee acting on its behalf, but no objection relative to the dimensions of the ground, goal post or other appurtenances of the game shall be entertained by the Association unless a protest is lodged with the Referee before the commencement of the match. Any Club lodging a protest with the Referee and failing to withdraw the protest or not proceeding with it shall be deemed guilty of serious misconduct and shall be dealt with by the Executive Council.
- (b) Protests and complaints must contain full particulars of the grounds upon which they are founded and must be lodged with the Administrative Office of the Association within 48 hours of the conclusion of the match or occurrence to which they refer or the first business day thereafter. No objection or protest shall be withdrawn except by permission of the Executive Council. Any member of the Executive Council being associated in any manner with the Membership Organization concerned shall not be present at the deliberations (except as a witness or representative) when such objection or protest is being considered and decided.
- (c) Any dispute occurring between Membership Organizations shall be referred to the Executive Council or an Ad Hoc Committee acting on behalf of the Executive Council whose recommendation upon acceptance by the Executive Council shall be binding upon all parties subject to Article 11 of these Rules.
- (d) No protest shall be considered by the Executive Council unless the complaining member shall have deposited with the Administrative Office the applicable fee of \$100.00 which may be forfeited in whole or in part to the Association, in the event of the member losing its case and the Association shall have the power to order the Membership Organization making a frivolous protest or complaint to pay any other expenses of the hearing.
- (e) Parties to a protest or complaint shall be afforded an opportunity of making a statement when the protest is being heard and where possible, shall receive 48 hours notice of the meeting, together with a copy of the protest. The Executive Council or Ad Hoc Committee acting on behalf of the Executive Council shall take into consideration when dealing with the protest the

possession by the protesting Membership Organization of any information, which if properly used might have avoided the protest.

- (f) Membership Organizations within seven days of receipt of written notification of any decision of the Executive Council or Ad Hoc Committee acting on behalf of the Executive Council may, except where stated in these rules or any other rule or regulation of the Association, appeal against such decision.
- (g) Such appeal being addressed to the Administrative Office of the Association (accompanied by the appropriate fee) for the adjudication of the Appeals Committee, whose decision shall be final and binding on all concerned. In the event of the appeal being unsuccessful, the fee shall be forfeited in whole or in part, at the discretion of the Appeals Committee.

## **8. Team Sheet**

The names (FULL FIRST AND LAST) of all players participating in a match must be recorded on the team sheet in the appropriate manner and must include the player's registration card number and jersey number to be worn during the match. The names of the eleven players starting the match must be recorded first followed by any substitute players. Failure of the Membership Organizations to strictly adhere to this Article shall render the Membership Organization to a fine of \$50 per incorrect team sheet.

## **9. Match Day Procedures**

Teams are required to arrive to the match venue at least 60 minutes before the scheduled match kick-off time. Teams are also expected to provide the team sheet and player ID Cards for inspection by the Match Commissioner or Match Officials by no later than 30 minutes before the scheduled match kick-off time. Failure to adhere to these requirements then the team shall be fined \$250.00 for the first infringement, \$500.00 for the second infringement and \$1000.00 for any further infringements and/or otherwise dealt with by the Association.

## **10. Team Colors**

Where there is a conflict in the colors worn by any two teams and for any match, the home team shall be required to change. However, should the visiting team not be wearing its registered colors thus causing the home team to change, the visiting team shall be fined \$250.00 for the first infringement, \$500.00 for the second infringement and \$1000.00 for any further infringements and/or otherwise dealt with by the Association. Should the home team not have a change of colors or delaying the kick-off by not having a change thus causing the away team to change the home team shall be fined \$250.00 for the first infringement, \$500.00 for the second infringement and \$1000.00 for any further infringements and/or otherwise dealt with by the Association.



**11. Exclusion of Membership Organization**

The Executive Council shall have the power to exclude from further participation in a Division or any other competition in the Association, or from membership in the Association any member whose conduct has in their opinion been objectionable and who have been found guilty of violating the rules and regulations of the Association.

**12. Alteration of Rules**

The Executive Council shall have the power to alter or add to these rules, as it may from time to time deem expedient.

**13. Rules Binding on Membership Organization**

- (i) Each member shall be deemed to have given its assent to the foregoing rules and agreed to abide by the decisions of the Executive Council subject to Article 6 of these Rules.
- (ii) The Executive Council shall have the power to decide on matters not provided for in these regulations.

## **RULES FOR PREMIER, FIRST, PLAYER DEVELOPMENT & WOMEN'S DIVISIONAL LEAGUE COMPETITIONS**

### **1. Name**

The competitions shall be known as the Bermuda Football Association Premier, First, Player Development and Women's Divisional League Competitions.

### **2. Trophies**

The Divisional Champions shall retain the trophy awarded during the presentation ceremony on the last match day of the season. All other trophies shall be the property of the Association or sponsor of any Divisional competitions.

### **3. Management**

The entire control and management of the Competition shall be vested in the Executive Council of the Association or the Competitions Committee acting on its behalf.

### **4. Operation**

- (a) Membership in the Competition shall be at the discretion of the Executive Council who shall have the power from time to time to determine the number of teams in each Division. No revisions shall be instituted unless at least one year's notice is given by the Executive Council except where stated herein.
- (b) No Membership Organization is permitted to have more than one team in any of the Divisional Competition.
- (c) Automatic Promotion and Relegation shall be applied for the first two and last two teams in the Premier and First Divisions except as provided for hereinafter.
  - (i) If more than two teams withdraw from the Premier Division after the fixtures have commenced and their vacancies not filled during the season, no team in that Division shall be automatically relegated. Such conditions of relegation shall be decided upon by the Executive Council.
  - (ii) Additional vacancies, caused by the retirement of a team or by the withdrawal of a member from the Competition shall be filled by the Executive Council.

## 5. Qualification of Players

- (a) Any Club entering a team in the Divisions shall be required to register a minimum of 18 players.
  - (b) Only players between the ages of 16 – 23 years old are permitted to register and participate in the Player Development League Divisional Competitions except where provided for in 5(c) & (d) below.
  - (c) Any player age 15 years old is eligible to participate in any Player Development League match only if their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday takes place before the end of the current season in which they wish to participate in any Player Development League match. Such players are not permitted to participate in any Premier or First Division match until they have reached their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. No player under the age of 15 years old shall be permitted to register and participate as a player in the Premier, First, Women's and Player Development League Divisional Competitions. Failure to comply with the above will render the player or players ineligible and the club will be sanctioned according to the Association's regulations governing ineligible players.
  - (d) A maximum of seven (7) players over the age of 23 years old may be listed on the team sheet and participate in any Player Development League Divisional Competition match provided the membership organization for which they are registered have a team in the Player Development League Division. Each team is permitted to have a maximum of five (5) over age players on the field at any one time.
  - (e) No player registered with a team in the Masters Division will be permitted to play in the Premier or First Division Competitions of the Association; however they can participate in the Player Development League and the FA Cup competition.
6. All Divisions shall be governed by the General Rules Governing Divisional Competitions and any other Rules and Regulations of the Association as they apply.
7. No alterations, additions or deletions may be made at an Annual or Semi-Annual Congress Meeting or Special Congress Meeting regarding relegation or promotion that has been determined through competition in a previous year.
8. All matches shall be administered and controlled in addition to the regulations contained herein as well as in accordance with the Match Day Procedures, which may be published by the Association from time to time.

9. Any matter not provided for in these regulations shall be resolved by the Executive Council.