

Buntingford Cougars 2020 5-a-Side Tournament FAQ's

Some Frequently Asked Questions about our Tournament.

Why don't you hold or reserve places? Teams will ask to have places reserved and then will not book all of those places. This will sometimes mean that a team wanting and ready to book are denied their place because a reserved place is held and never used. So our advice is always the same "sorry we do not reserve or hold places – but it is quick and easy to book".

Where Is It and What Facilities Are There? The tournament is hosted at Buntingford Cougars Football Facility, The Bury, London Road, Buntingford Herts SG9 9HZ. At the facility is a bar and BBQ serving food, drinks and ice creams, there are also fun activities and stalls. There is wheelchair access to the sports field.

What Surface is at the Venue? The tournament is played on grass.

Are Dogs Allowed? No dogs are allowed at our tournament.

What time do we need to arrive? For all groups registration is from 8.30am. Teams must register by 09.15. First matches 9.30am. With so many arriving at the same time it is advisable to give yourself plenty of time to park and get into The Bury facility.

How long are matches? How many games will we play? All matches are twelve minutes long, knockout matches if level, go straight to penalties. Assuming all places are booked and all teams turn up every team in tournament formats will play a minimum of five group matches and between one and three knockout games. Knockouts start at either quarter finals or semi finals depending on numbers so a team reaching a final will play a maximum of seven or eight matches.

For the Friendly Festival format for Under6s and Under7s on 20th June the number of matches will depend on number of entries but we aim to group teams in sixes so they all play a minimum of five matches of 12 minutes.

How do you seed and group teams? Each entry is asked a series of questions when booking, we ask them to describe each team as 'strong' or 'average' or 'development', we also ask them to confirm which league and division most players play in and finally we ask how many of their squad have been at elite academies, centre of excellence or regional development centres, we will then rank teams 1 – 24 or 1-18 or 1-12 depending on the number of entries. Once seeded we structure groups with group 1 containing the strongest teams 1-6, teams 7-18 (theoretically average teams) go into groups 2 and 3, teams seeded 19-24 (theoretically development teams) in group 4. Please note we rely on information when booking and this is not an exact science but we do the best we can to create meaningful matches for everyone.

How do knockout stages work? In every tournament format section there will be knockouts; we call them a cup, a trophy and a shield. In a section with 24 teams in 4 groups (U7 – U14/15) knockouts start with a quarter final. The CUP quarter finals consists of eight teams.

The top 4 teams from group 1, group 2 and 3 winners plus group 2 and 3 runners up. These eight teams are organised into quarter final matches so that every team plays a team from a different group in the group stage.

The TROPHY quarter finals consists of eight teams. The 5th and 6th teams placed from group 1, the 3rd and 4th teams from groups two and three and the top two teams from group 4. These eight teams are organised into quarter final matches so that every team plays a team from a different group in the group stage.

The SHIELD quarter finals consists of eight teams. The 5th and 6th placed teams from groups 2 and 3 plus group 4 teams who finished 3rd, 4th, 5th and 6th. These eight teams are organised into quarter final matches so that every team plays a team from a different group in the group stage.

THE PRE-ARRANGED "WHO PLAYS WHO" IN QUARTER FINALS CAN BE SEEN ON THE TOURNAMENT WEBSITE FROM A FEW DAYS BEFORE YOUR TOURNAMENT DAY.

All KO matches including finals are 12 minutes and go straight to penalties if needed. In U14 and U15 age groups that have less than four groups of six teams knockouts may start at semi-final stage.

How many players can I register? And do the players have to be registered to our club? Maximum number of players per team is 9. Players can only play in one team on the day. Each team is allowed a maximum of two guest players. All other players must be registered to your team except Under6s.

Why do I need to bring registration cards or proof of DOB for guest players? We do not ask to see registration cards or DOB at registration on the day, only your team sheet indicating if the player is registered with your club or a guest player. Registration cards or proof of DOB will only be requested if there is a dispute about a player's validity to play in the tournament based on age i.e. someone claiming that a team is playing an over or under age player. In that event the player's age will be checked with the registration card or D.O.B. document and if the team cannot produce either then the entire team risk facing disqualification. We do recognise that Under6s and some Under7s players will not have had league registration cards.

Can Academy Players Play? The FA rule and academy agreements restrict a player who is contracted and / or registered with a professional club academy or centre of excellence to only allowed to play for the organisation they are contracted / registered with. Players and / or parents who are contracted will always know that they are because they will have signed a contract / agreement making clear that the player cannot play for other grassroots teams. Players who train with professional club regional development centres but are not contracted to the club can play.

What about girls in the tournament? Our tournament allows mixed teams except in the girls only section where girls teams must contain girls only (this separate tournament will be online soon).

What Will I Need to Bring? Bring equipment that you would normally bring to a match including bibs (in case of colour clash) and at least one correct sized match quality ball and a medical emergency aid kit appropriate for grassroots football.

Do teams and players get trophies or medals? Teams winning the tournament knockout sections are awarded a team trophy and eight individual player trophies, the cups and trophies are for clubs and players to keep. Losing finalists are awarded eight individual player trophies or medals.

In the Under6s and Under7s friendly festivals all players get a medal.

Can players play up a year? Normal FA rules apply so yes a player can 'play up' one year.

Can players enter the penalty area? Is the goalie allowed out of the area? Yes and yes. We try to keep rules as similar as possible to normal football. This also helps to keep games flowing without too many stoppages.

Is there a retreat line? There is a retreat line up to and including U10s as per normal mini soccer rules so that it is familiar to the children.

Is the ball allowed over head height? For up to and including U10s it is allowed over head height so as to keep rules simple and familiar. For U11s and older the ball is not allowed over the head height of the referee. (see rules for details).

Why do you ask all adults to pay to come in? We ask that everyone 16years and over pays £1 at the gate. This is to support the tournament and the club's fundraising efforts.

Do I get a refund on cancellation? A cancellation before 1st May will get a refund. There are no refunds for cancellations after 1st May. This is because we will have started working on the online groups and fixtures and we have little time to replace a withdrawn team.

Buntingford Cougars 5 a Side Tournament Address and Directions The Bury, London Rd, Buntingford, Herts SG9 9HZ. Tel 01763 271522. There will be stewards to direct you to a car park. Please note the car parking areas will be extremely busy between 8.30 and 9.30am. From A10 South (eg Hertford, London): A10 north to Buntingford. The A10 reduces to a single carriageway just before you reach Buntingford. At roundabout (BP garage) you will either be directed into The Bury car park (3rd exit off roundabout) or once full the London Road car park (2nd exit off roundabout) opposite The Bury. From A10 North (eg Royston, Cambs): A10 South towards Buntingford, Hertford, London. At 1st roundabout (BP garage) continue on A10 south signed Hertford. At next roundabout you will either be directed into The Bury car park (2nd exit) or once full the London Road car park (1st exit) opposite The Bury. From A507 West (eg Baldock, Stevenage, A1): A507 east to A10 Buntingford. At roundabout (BP garage) take 3rd exit right

onto A10 south signed Hertford. At next roundabout you will either be directed into The Bury car park (2nd exit) or once full the London Road car park (1st exit) opposite The Bury. From A120 East (eg Essex, Stortford): A120 west to A10 Puckeridge. At A10 / A120 roundabout turn right 3rd exit onto A10 north signed Cambridge / Buntingford. At next roundabout continue on A10 north towards Buntingford. The A10 reduces to a single carriageway just before you reach Buntingford. At roundabout (BP garage) you will either be directed into The Bury car park (2nd exit off roundabout) or once full the London Road car park (1st exit off roundabout) opposite The Bury. If you wish to visit the market town of Buntingford turn right out of our facility. For shops there is a CoOp Supermarket after 400m on right followed by a high street that contains pubs, cafes and shops. The Bury