



TOURNAMENT RULES

RULES OF THE BUNTINGFORD COUGARS 2025 5-A-SIDE TOURNAMENT

1. Competition Format

1.1. This Competition is called the **Buntingford Cougars 5-A-Side Tournament** and is sanctioned by the Hertfordshire County FA

1.2. The competition is by open invitation. Applications will only be considered upon receipt of a fully completed entry form and cleared payment. Entries will be confirmed by the Tournament Organiser at least two weeks prior to the tournament.

1.3. The tournament is played as a Trophy Event for Under7's and older, featuring results, league tables, a knock-out stage (for qualifying teams) and an overall winner for each age group.

2. Age Groups, Squads & Player Qualification

2.1. Age groups will relate to the 2024/25 season

We will run the following age groups and formats:

- U7-U14, 5v5 format for mixed boys and girls
- U8-U13, 5v5 format for girls only

To participate a player must be aged 6 before 7th June 2025 and if attained the age of six (6) during aforementioned season then the player is only allowed to play in the U7 age group.

2.2. Each team shall register a squad of players on the day of the competition.

2.3. Each team may register a squad of up to 9 players.

2.4. Each registered player shall only play for one team throughout the duration of the tournament.

2.5. Each team shall appoint a manager. The manager shall be responsible for their team being registered on arrival and being available to play on the correct pitch at the correct time. The manager is also responsible for adherence to the tournament rules and communication of the rules to their squads' players and supporters.

2.6. All players must wear shin pads and appropriate footwear.

3. Duration of Matches & Balls

3.1. All matches will be 12 minutes in duration straight through.

3.2. There is no Half time interval.

Respect



3.3. All teams are responsible for considering players' playing time does not exceed the FA's guidelines on maximum playing time for children.

3.4. In each match the first named team will provide an appropriate quality and correct sized match ball; U7's-U10s size3, U11-U14s size4

3.5. In the event of a clash of colours, the second named team should provide alternative shirts / bibs.

4. Scores & Results

4.1. The competition shall be played on an initial league basis for all age groups with three points for a win, one for a draw.

4.2. If a team fails to fulfil a fixture three points are awarded to their opponents with a score recorded as 0-0.

4.3. The number of teams qualifying for the knockout stage of the tournament will depend on the total entries and number of league groups at each age group and will be confirmed on the day of the tournament at registration.

4.4. If two or more teams finish their initial league with the same number of points, then the highest placed team will be determined by:

- the result of their head-to-head match
- then goal difference
- then the team that has scored the most goals
- kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

4.5. All knockout matches will be decided by the teams scoring the most goals during normal time. If the score is equal after normal time, kicks from the penalty mark will decide the winner.

4.6. In all penalty shootouts the five players who were on the field of play at the end normal time shall take a penalty. The highest score from the five penalties will win. If at the end of five penalties, the scores remain equal, it will go to sudden death with the same five players participating; under IFAB rules a team is able to vary the order of players on the second and subsequent round of penalties.

4.7. During a penalty shootout only penalty takers are allowed on the pitch; U7-U9 teams may also have one coach per team. No persons whatsoever are permitted to stand behind the goal during a penalty shootout.

5. Playing Rules

5.1. The Laws of association football will apply.

5.2. A maximum of five players per team will be allowed on the field of play with a minimum of four subject to the rule below.

5.3. Substitutes are roll on, roll off from those named on the registration form. A substituted player can return in the same match. Referee's must be informed of and allow substitutions. The number of substitutions made during a game is unlimited.

5.4. The off-side rule doesn't apply.

5.5. All free kicks are direct other than those awarded for the ball being over head height (see 5.8 for Mixed Boys & Girls ages Under11 and older).

5.6. Goal Kicks can be taken from any point in the penalty area.

5.7. For all dead ball restarts opponents must be at least five metres away from the ball.

5.8. For Mixed Boys & Girls age groups Under11's and older – if the ball goes over head height (deemed to be 6 ft), then an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opponents of the team that touched the ball last. The exception to this rule is if the ball travels over head height as a result of a goalkeeper's save or a clear deflection off any player in which case play continues. For clarity, the girls only tournament will not use the over head height rule

5.9. If an 'over head height' offence has occurred inside the offending player's own penalty area an indirect free kick will be awarded to the opponents which must be taken outside the penalty area.

5.10. For age groups up to and including Under10's and the girls only tournament the ball IS ALLOWED over head height (normal rules).

5.11. In Under11's and older, where the head height rule applies, throw ins will be under arm. In Under7s to Under 10s and the girls only tournament throw ins will be as per normal FA rules.

5.12. For age groups up to and including Under10's the retreat line rule applies for goal kicks whereby opponents must retreat to their own half until the ball is in play. The goal kick can be taken before the opposition has retreated (normal rules). Referees should keep games flowing with advantage where possible and ensuring teams retreat quickly for goal kicks.

6. Players, Officials and Supporters Conduct

6.1. This competition uses the yellow and red card system and details of these offences will be reported by the referee immediately after each match to the Tournament Organiser, who shall administer fully the requirements under Rule 6.

6.2. An accumulation of two yellow cards on a single day in the competition will result in the player being suspended from the next match.

6.3. Two yellow cards in one match equals a red card and the player will be sent off.

6.4. A player who receives a red card (either straight red or for two yellow cards in the same match) will not be permitted to take any further part in the competition.

6.5. All cautions and red cards will be dealt with on the day of the match.

6.6. Any misconduct from the tournament will be reported to County FA by the referee as normal.

Respect



7. Reporting Results

7.1. The referee / winning team shall be responsible for reporting the result of the game to the result co-ordinator at the conclusion of each game.

8. Protests and Appeals

8.1. All questions of eligibility, qualification of players or interpretation of Rules shall be referred to the Tournament Committee, but no objection relative to the dimensions of the playing area or other appurtenances thereon shall be entertained by the Committee unless a protest is lodged with the referee before the commencement of the game.

9. Referees

9.1. Referees shall be appointed by the Competition.

10. Medals and trophies

10.1. A Team trophy will be awarded to the Winners of each knock-out tournament.

10.2. Individual trophies will be awarded to the players of the Winners and Runners-up of each knock-out tournament.

11. Respect Policy

11.1. The organisers of the Tournament take pride in hosting a friendly event that applies the FA Respect Initiatives for a safe and positive environment for everyone to enjoy the game

11.2. We have zero tolerance to abusive behaviour to others at our tournament, including our referees and volunteers

11.3. Anyone displaying abusive behaviour will be instructed to leave immediately and the team they are associated with may be disqualified.

11.4. Please join us in supporting all of our referees, particularly our young referees.

11.5. Please ensure every person stands at least one metre away from the touchline during play.