League Guidelines 2020 -21

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NB. These notes supplement the League Rules and do not supersede them. The League Rules take precedent in the event of any discrepancy.

Abbreviations

WGS = Whole Game System

FAFT = FA Fulltime System

FAMD = FA Matchday App

CWO = Club Welfare Officer

League Information

League Contacts

President	Jon Lunn	
Vice Presidents	Den Smallman & Steve Paddock	
Chairman	Ray Wright	ra.wright@btinternet.com
Vice Chairman	Joe Whitehouse	jwhitehouse49@aol.com
Secretary	Ray Wright	ra.wright@btinternet.com
League Welfare Officer	Sharon Townsend	cwo.mercianleague@hotmail.com
Treasurer	Sarah Broadhurst	sarah.mercian@gmail.com
Fixtures Secretary	Don Loader	don.loader@ic24.net
Player Registration Secretary	Mark Burford	playerreg.mercian@gmail.com
Referee Support Officer	Ian Goddard	ianqualityairandwater@gmail.com
WFA Central Referee Appointments	Helen Plumley	helen.plumley@worcestershirefa.com
Club / Team Registration	Darren Broadhurst	darron.mercian@gmail.com

League Forms & Documents

Copies of forms and Documents are available from news page on the league's FA Fulltime site and the Facebook Group

FA Guidance

WGS – There are plenty of 'How to do guides' in each section of WGS. Click on the Red 'Need Help?' tab on the right side of the page

Grassroots Technology – The FA have put a lot of the resources relating to WGS, FAFT and FAMD. You need to login. https://grassrootstechnology.freshdesk.com/support/home

Facebook

The league has a Facebook page and Facebook group, both called Mercian Youth Football League. The FB page is viewable by the public and the FB group is a closed group. Members of the FB group must be WFA officials, league officials, club secretaries, team coaches or referees who are part of the league.

Both are available to be used for the benefit of teams playing in the league. Posts relating to teams or clubs playing outside the league will be not be approved or will be deleted.

Before posting please consider the membership of the group, posts relating to new players will not reach your target audience. These types of posts may be more suited to the FB page than to the FB group.

Penalty Points System

The league has introduced a new system to reduce the number of fines issued to a club. Teams will be awarded a penalty point each time they breach specified league rules, once a team has received a total of 5 penalty points then the club will be fined £25. The club will then be fined the standard tariff (normally £10) for every subsequent breach by that team.

Once a team has been issued a penalty point for not entering the Match Day information on FAFT, they will then be issued with a further penalty point every 7 days the Match Day information is late, up to a total of 4 points for that offence. If the Match Day information has still not been provided after issuing a total of 4 penalty points for that offence, then the Management Committee reserve the right to suspend the team's future fixtures.

Registrations

Club / Team Registration

Before a team can register players, the FA Club Affiliation process (on WGS) must have been completed to the point where the team has been attached to the league. This enables the league to add the team to its league structure and place it into a division.

Teams will not be processed until the Club have submitted the league's Club & Team Registration forms to the league Team Registration Secretary and the league fees have been paid in full.

Clubs must ensure the information submitted on WGS matches the information on the forms submitted to the league. Any changes must be notified to the league Team Registration Secretary.

Note. A team manager / coach must only be associated with one team that plays on the same day. It is not possible to be responsible for more than 1 team that plays on the same day.

Player Registrations

1. All player registrations must be completed in WGS.
2. A digital ID / passport 'style' photo of the player must be included with the player registration.

   Photographs MUST meet ALL the following criteria;

   a. Head and shoulders, facing forwards
   b. Reasonable likeness
   c. No hats or sunglasses
   d. Only one person in the photograph
   e. Clear image, of reasonable quality, face not in shadow
   f. NO photographs of another photograph
   g. Plain background
3. It is the club's player registration secretary's responsibility to check player ID. Please be aware that the league can ask to see this if required. Currently only new players require their ID to be checked.
4. Please be aware that it is the club's responsibility to ensure that any player aged over 10, that last played in a team based in any other country than England (this includes Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) MUST have an International Clearance Certificate before the player can be registered.
5. Once your players are registered in the WGS they need to be allocated to the teams, this is down by ticking the players and assigning to a team from the top menu.
6. All players must have an email address. For players up to u16s this requires a parent to be attached to the player, the parents email address will then be used by the system. Players u17/18 can use their own email address. This email address will be used to obtain consent.
7. Online consent is required each time a player is registered with the league. When registering a new player make sure the parent / player checks their email account for the consent email
8. Once assigned to their team and online consent has been confirmed, then player can be submitted to the league for approval. To do this select the player(s) and then click submit to league.
9. If for any reason a player is rejected; once you have rectified the issue, you need to resubmit the player for approval.

10. Teams must register and league approved a minimum number of players 30 days before the start of the season (see table below);

    Teams that have not registered enough players will have a penalty point issued. The league committee will also consider suspending the team's fixtures until enough players have been registered.

11. A player may register for more than one team playing in the MJFL as long as they play in different age groups. For practical reasons a player should only be registered for one MJFL club per matchday. A player may wish to play for a MJFL team in the same age group must first be transferred. Clubs are responsible for ensuring the FA's maximum playing times are not exceeded.

12. Once your players are registered all teams must print off a squad list from the WGS, these should be laminated and made available at ALL games if requested by officials from your opponents, the league or FA. This request cannot be refused. Teams who do not have a copy of their squad list will be issued with a penalty point.

13. During the season player registration details must be submitted by 11pm Wednesday in order that they may be approved in time to play at the weekend. Once approved new squad sheets need to be printed off from WGS. This also applies to player transfers.

14. The last date to register / transfer a player is on April 1st. To play in a Cup Semi-final and Final, players must be registered by January 31st.

15. Only players approved by the league may play in any league sanctioned match.

16. If a player leaves a team then the club should inform the League Registration Secretary once any money owed and any club kit has been paid / returned. The League Registration Secretary will cancel the player's registration after 14 days.

Format	Age Grp	Minimum Registered	Maximum Registered	Match Day Squad
5v5	u7-8	5 players	10 players	10 players
7v7	u9-10	7 players	14 players	14 players
9v9	u11-12	9 players	18 players	14 players
11v11	u13-18	11 players	22 players	16 players

Transfers

1. All transfers will be dealt with through WGS.

2. To transfer a player, you must search for them as you would any other player, if they are registered for another team which plays on the same day i.e. Saturday or Sunday, then the club must submit a written 7 day Notice of Approach. If the teams both play in the MJFL then a NOA form must be sent to league Player Registration Secretary who will forward it to the Club Secretary, if the teams play in different leagues then a NOA letter must be sent to the Club Secretary of player's existing club. During this period, the new club must not communicate with the player and the player must not play or train with the new club. The player must not be registered on WGS until the 7-day NOA period has expired.

3. If the club holding the players registration has a dispute regarding the transfer this must be sent to the League Player Registration Secretary in writing within three days otherwise the transfer will be approved by the league.

4. Clubs should allow 10 to 14 days for the transfer process to be completed

5. The transfer fee of £10 will be invoiced to the new club by the league treasurer.

Suspended Players

1. It is the club's responsibility to ensure that a team does not play a suspended player.
2. Suspensions automatically start the weekend following a player / club official is dismissed.
3. If the suspension does not appear on WGS then it is the club's responsibility to contact their county FA
4. It is the club's responsibility to update qualifying matches on WGS or the suspension will not show as being served.
5. The suspension remains in force if a Red Card until all qualifying matches have been played in full. A red card will be displayed against a player's name on WGS if they are suspended.
6. The league Player Registration Secretary will add suspended players to Fulltime. Opposition teams will be able to see this. A player's suspension will only be removed once the Red Card on WGS has been removed.

Playing a Match

Arranging a Game

1. 3g / 4g pitches must be FA approved and listed on the FA's register. https://3g.thefa.me.uk/
2. Default Kick Off Times;

Saturday AM	9:30	u7-u11 All	11:00	U12-u18 Girls
Sunday PM	2:00	u12-u18 Boys		

3. Any alterations to kick off time (Please consider travelling times of your opponents) or venue must be agreed with the Away team, once agreed the Home team must inform the Fixture Secretary, WFA Central Referee Appointments Officer and Match Officials must be informed by the Home teams at least 3 days prior to the fixture. Whenever possible please give the Fixture Secretary and WFA Central Referee Appointments Officer as much notice of and changes. Late changes may mean that your allocated referee is no longer available.
4. The home team must contact the away team and referee with match details, pitch surface (grass or 3g) and shirt colours at least 3 days prior to the match. This should be by phone, text or email. When contact is made by text or email the away team and referee must confirm receipt of the details. If a team cannot get in touch with the appointed referee, they must inform the league Referee Support Officer or WFA Central Referee Appointments Officer.
5. If there is a clash of colours then the home team should change kits, unless this also clashes then the away team should change kits. Players, including the goalkeeper are NOT permitted to wear black or very dark shirts. Goalkeeper's kit should distinguish them from their own team, their opponents and the match officials. Bibs should not be worn.
6. If you are the away team and have not heard from the home team, please contact the home team to obtain details before contacting the League Secretary.
7. If the referee is unavailable, please check Fulltime to see if a replacement referee has been appointed before contacting the WFA Central Referee Appointments Officer. If the referee is not available then both teams must agree on somebody, aged 14 or older and at least 1 year older than the players, to referee the whole match. This person assumes the full powers of a qualified referee.
8. Referees qualified to referee youth football are issued with a photo ID card by the WFA. Referees without this card should not referee the match. Referees must produce this card upon the request of either team.
9. If the pitch is likely to be unplayable then the Home team should seek to reverse the fixture whenever possible. If the opponents agree then the Fixture Secretary, WFA Central Referee Appointments Officer, and Match Officials must be informed as soon as possible.

10. Remember if the game is called off you must first consult the referee, failure to do so will mean the referee may need to be paid for his attendance. The Match Postponement Form must be sent to the League Fixture Secretary and the result recorded as P-P on Fulltime

Match Day

1. It is the home teams' responsibility to ensure that if a permanent pitch barrier is not present then a respect barrier must be used. The barrier must run the FULL length of the pitch and be a minimum of two meters from the touch line. Painted lines or cones are NOT acceptable.
2. All spectators must remain behind the barrier. No spectators should be on the technical area side of the pitch. If spectators are found within this area they will be asked to move.
3. Corner flags and goal nets must also be provided
4. Teams must have an up to date copy of the Squad List printed from WGS. Only players (unless suspended) on this sheet are eligible to play. The WGS Squad List must be available for inspection by your opponents, match officials or WFA / league officials.
5. All players must be approved on WGS by the league and be listed on the latest WGS Squad List prior to playing in any match
6. **TEAM SHEETS**. Each team must **print** and fully complete a league team sheet which must be exchanged with their opponents at least 10 minutes before kick-off. The league may request a copy of the form which must be provided within 7 days.
7. The only people allowed in the technical area are the named substitute players and named qualified coaches who are registered on WGS, listed on the latest WGS Squad List and listed on the team sheet.
8. Anybody in the technical area may be issued with a Yellow or Red card by the referee, if the person cannot be identified then the card will be shown to the senior coach.
9. Rolling substitutes are permitted, in line with the Laws of the Game.
    a. U7 to u10 a maximum number of substitutes equal to the number of players starting the match, i.e. 5v5 – 5 subs, 6v6 – 6 subs and 7v7 – 7 subs.
    b. U11 to u18 a maximum of 5 substitutes may play in a match.
10. Team captains shall be identified with an armband.
11. Temporary Dismissals (Sin bins). The league are operating sin bins for dissent cautions. This applies to ALL age groups. The FA guidance is available from the WFA. Sin Bin periods are;
    a. Match length up to 80 mins (u7 to u16 & double headers) 8 mins
    b. Match length 90 mins (U17/18) 10 mins
12. When not appointed to 9v9 or 11v11 matches, both teams must provide an Assistant Referee who must be aged 14 or older and at least 1 year older than the players. Club Assistant Referees should refrain from coaching the players.
13. All teams will have a fully stocked First Aid Kit of adequate size at all matches.

Match Lengths.

Age Group	Normal Match (Each Way)	Double Header (Each Way)
U7/8	20 mins	10 mins
U9/10	25 mins	15 mins
U11/12	30 mins	15 mins
U13/14	35 mins	22 mins
U15/16	40 mins	25 mins
U17/18	45 mins	25 mins

14. Double Headers - two consecutive matches
    a. Half Time Interval shall not exceed 10 minutes
    b. Interval between games shall be 10 minutes
    c. Any disciplinary action by the referee from the first game is NOT carried forward to the next game. If a player is sent off in the first game, the player is allowed to take part in the next game. Common sense shall prevail from Club Officials depending on the criteria from any such action.
    d. Teams to complete separate Team Sheets and Match Results / Stats (on FAFT) for each match

Match Official fees are to be paid immediately after the match by the home team (*Match fees are usually shared between the two teams and include expenses (there is no additional mileage fee)*;

11v11	Referee £30	Assistant Referee £15	Double Header Ref / AR £36 / £18
9v9	Referee £24	Assistant Referee £12	Double Header Ref / AR £30 / £15
Mini-soccer	Referee £18	n/a	Double Header Referee £24

Attending venue & match called off due to reasons outside the control of the clubs - Half Fee

Match Abandoned - Full fee

Cup Competitions

1. A player cannot play in the Semi-final or Final unless they were registered before January 31st.
2. Any team playing an unregistered or otherwise ineligible player or players shall be removed from the Competition and may also be fined and/or otherwise dealt with at the discretion of the Management Committee.
3. For all knockout rounds, should the score remain level at the end of normal time the game will be decided by the taking of penalty kicks as taken from the IFAB guidelines. The Laws of the Game state that only players that are on the field / in the sin bin at the end of the match are permitted to take kicks from the penalty mark. Only these PLAYERS and Match Officials are to remain on the field when kicks from the penalty mark are being taken.

   For the Finals, should the score remain level at the end of normal time;

   a. teams up to u11s the trophy will be shared,
   b. teams u12 up, the tie will be decided by the taking of penalty kicks.
4. League and Cup Trophies must be engraved and returned to the league before February 28th.

Reporting Results (SMS & Match Results / Stats)

1. Both teams will receive a text message during the game asking for the result of the game. To return the score simply enter the home score then the away score e.g. 1-1. If the game is postponed, then you would enter P-P. No other text should be entered on the text. The result must be sent with 48 hours.
2. Both teams must complete the Match Results / Stats (Players, Score, Respect (FA & League Marks) and Referee marks on FAFT within 3 days. Note: FA Matchday App may be used to update FAFT, but the league only has access to the data on FAFT, teams are responsible for checking the data has been transferred successfully.
3. Once logged in to FAFT, select Results and then Results & Stats from the menu, and follow the prompts. Remember to select **UPDATE** to save the data entered. at the bottom of each page. Fast Result Entry does not allow you to enter the match stats required by the league.
4. Failure to complete all areas of Match Day Information within 3 days will result in disciplinary action (see Penalty Point System). This will be monitored by League Officials. If a team does not complete any of the Match Day Information a penalty point will be issued for each section that is incomplete, i.e. up to 3 points per match
5. Referee marks - Any total mark of 60 and below, an objective reason for the low mark must be provided in the comments box. You can also use this box for positive comments.
6. Results for u7 to u11 matches must not be published
7. Once a team has been issued penalty point(s) for not entering the Match Day information on FAFT, they will then be issued with a further penalty point every 7 days the Match Day information is late, up to a total of 4 points for that offence. If the Match Day information has still not been fully completed after issuing a total of 4 penalty points for that offence, then the Management Committee reserve the right to suspend the team's future fixtures.

Proposed Key Dates

	Month	Date	Description	Affects
2020	*May*	1/7/20	WGS Club Affiliation	Clubs
	June	1	New Laws of the Game come into force	Teams
		7	AGM / League Meeting	Clubs
	July	1	No 11v11 football to be played during July– FA Rules	Teams
			WGS Player Registration – **Online** Consent required	Teams
	August	7	Minimum number of players must be registered	Clubs
		16	League Meeting	Teams
	September	5/6	Start of Season	Teams
		TBC	u7 / u8 Funday (TBC)	U7/8s
	October	11	League Meeting	Clubs
		24/25/31	Half Term – No Fixtures	Teams
	November	1	Half Term – No Fixtures	Teams
	December	19/20	Christmas – No Fixtures	Teams
		26/27	Christmas – No Fixtures	Teams
2021	January	2/3	Christmas – No Fixtures	Teams
		10	League Meeting	Clubs
		31	Deadline to sign new players eligible to play in Cup Semi-Final and Final matches	Teams
	February	13/14/	Half Term – No Fixtures	Teams
		20/21	Half Term – No Fixtures	Teams
		28	Return Trophies (engraved by the club)	Clubs
	March	1	Club / team applications open for next season	Clubs
		TBC	League Meeting	Clubs
		21	Cup Finals (TBC)	Teams
		28	Cup Finals (TBC)	Teams
	April	1	Deadline to sign / transfer players (also see January 31)	Teams
		3/4	Easter – No Fixtures	Teams
		10/11	Easter – No Fixtures	Teams
		17/18	Easter – No Fixtures	Teams
		TBC	League Meeting	Clubs
		25	Cup Finals (TBC)	Teams
	May	9	Cup Finals (TBC)	Teams
		16	Cup Finals (TBC)	Teams
		22/23	End of Season	Teams
	June	13	AGM / League Meeting	Clubs

Changes to the Laws of the Game (LOTG) 2020/21

Each year the laws of football are revised by IFAB. These come into force on June 1st and apply to all 9v9 or 11v11 matches sanctioned by the FA. Small sided matches have their own laws which are issued by the FA.

A full copy of the current LOTG and documents relating to this season's changes and explanations can be downloaded from http://www.theifab.com/home

Small sided football Handbook http://www.thefa.com/-/media/thefacom-new/files/get-involved/youth-football/mini-soccer-and-youth-futsal-handbook-2018.ashx

For u7 to u10 matches, then Power Play is optional, there are no objections from the league to using this as long as both teams agree.

Most changes for 2020/21 are clarifications or minor changes, there are no major changes.

Law 10 – Determining the Outcome of a Match

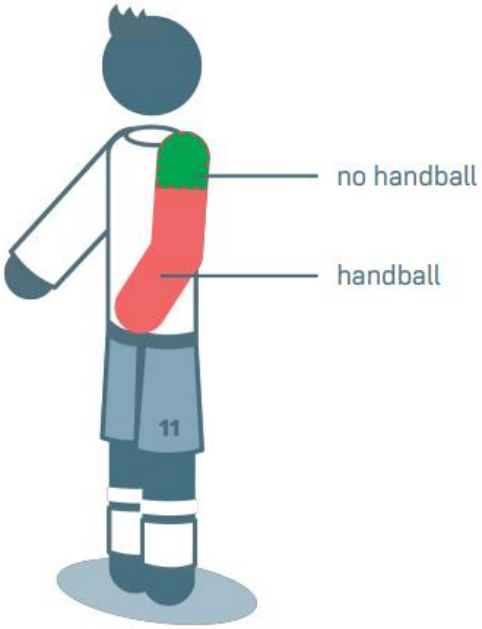
- Yellow cards (YCs) and warnings are not carried forward into kicks from the penalty mark (KFPM)
- See also changes to Law 14 relating to KFPM

Law 11 – Offside

- A player in an offside position receiving the ball from an opponent who deliberately plays the ball, including by deliberate handball, is not considered to have gained an advantage, unless it was a deliberate save by any opponent.

Law 12 – Fouls and Misconduct

- Handball:
  - the boundary between the shoulder and the arm is defined as the bottom of the armpit



  - 'accidental' handball by an attacking player (or team-mate) is only penalised if it occurs 'immediately' before a goal or clear goal-scoring opportunity
- A goalkeeper can receive a YC (stopping promising attack) or be sent off (Denial of an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity) for 'illegally' touching the ball a second time after a restart (e.g. goal kick, free kick etc.) even if the touch is with the hand/arm
- Any offence (not only a foul) which 'interferes with or stops a promising attack' should result in a YC
- A player who fails to respect the 4m required distance at a dropped ball should receive a YC
- If the referee plays advantage or allows a 'quick' free kick for an offence which 'interfered with or stopped a promising attack', the YC is not issued
- If the referee plays advantage for a Denial of an Obvious Goal Scoring Opportunity offence, the RC becomes a YC, so to be consistent, if the referee plays advantage for an offence which interfered with or stopped a promising attack, the YC should not be issued.
- Holding offence is "A holding offence occurs only when a player's contact with an opponent's body or equipment impedes the opponent's movement"

Law 14 – The Penalty Kick

- An offence by the goalkeeper is not penalised if a penalty kick misses the goal or rebounds from the goal (without a touch from the goalkeeper) unless the offence clearly affected the kicker
- The goalkeeper is warned for the first offence; it is a YC for any further offence(s)
- The kicker is penalised if the goalkeeper and the kicker offend at exactly the same time