

The Co-Operative Insurance Cup

Rules

1. **Competition format**

(a) **Name:**

The competition shall be called The Co-Operative Insurance Cup

(b) **Organising Committee:**

The control and organisation of the competition shall be vested in the IFA Premiership Management Committee.

(c) **Participating Clubs:**

Only the clubs in membership of the IFA Premiership and IFA Championship shall participate in the Competition.

(d) **Awards:**

The Competition shall be sponsored by The Co-Operative Insurance and the prize money shall be distributed as determined by the IFA Premiership Management Committee annually. The Club winning the trophy will retain it for one year. The trophy shall remain the property of the IFA Premiership Management Committee.

2. **Competition format**

(a) The competition shall be played on a knock-out basis and in principle matches prior to the semi-finals and final shall be played on a home and away basis (The Organising Committee may also if required arrange qualifying rounds in such a format as they consider appropriate).

(b) The team scoring the greater number of aggregate goals from both matches shall qualify for the next round.

(c) In the event of teams scoring the same number of goals over two legs the team which scores more away goals shall qualify for the next round. If this procedure does not produce a result ie if the two teams score the same number of goals both home and away, two periods of fifteen (15) minutes shall be played at the end of the second leg.

If during the extra time both teams score the same number of goals the away goal rule shall apply.

If however there are no goals scored during extra time the tie shall be decided by kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International FA Board.

(d) The twelve (12) IFA Premiership clubs shall be seeded and enter the competition at such times as the IFA Championship clubs have reduced their number to four (4) teams.

(e) In semi-finals and final ties matches shall be played to a finish (not home and away). If at the end of normal playing time the scores are equal then two periods of fifteen (15) minutes each way will be played. If there are no goals scored during extra time the tie shall be decided by kicks from the penalty mark in accordance with the conditions approved by the International FA Board.

(f) The final tie shall be played at Windsor Park. In the event of Linfield FC participating in the final tie no ground rent will be payable.

3. **Qualification of Players**

Only players who have been registered by their clubs in accordance with the Articles and Rules of the IFA Premiership and IFA Championship shall be eligible to compete in the competition and no player will be eligible to play for more than one club at any stage in the competition.

4. **Colours of Clubs**

In the event of a clash of colours in matches prior to semi-finals the visiting club shall change.

In the semi-finals and final ties both clubs shall change unless otherwise agreed by the clubs concerned or as directed by the IFA Premiership.

5. **Admission Charges**

In all matches up to and including the Final admission charges will be set as the IFA Premiership Management Committee may determine annually.

6. **Financial Regulations**

(a) In all matches prior to the semi-finals the total admission charges to the ground and stands shall be retained by the 'home' club after deduction of vat and match officials fees and travelling expenses.

(b) In the semi-finals the net profit shall be divided as follows: 10% to the IFA and the balance divided equally among the four (4) competing clubs.

(c) In the Final 20% of the net profit shall be payable to the IFA, and the balance divided equally between the two competing clubs.

(d) Members' tickets will not be valid for the Semi-Finals and Final.

(e) All money generated from the sale of tickets in respect of semi-finals and final ties must be submitted by the respective clubs to the league within fourteen (14) days following the date of the match together with a reconciliation of unsold tickets.

(f) In respect of the use of facilities in semi-finals and final ties the following ground rental arrangements should apply:

Semi-finals: 10% of the net gate receipts from both ties shall be divided equally between the clubs concerned.

Final: 10% of net gate receipts shall be paid to Linfield FC except in the case that Linfield FC is participating in the Final.

7. **Match Official fee**

In all matches Referees fees and expenses shall be paid at the appropriate rate.

8. **Half-time interval**

The half-time interval in all matches shall not exceed fifteen (15) minutes.

9. **Processional Entry and Fair Play Handshake**

The match officials shall lead both teams together on to the field of play five minutes prior to kick-off time. The teams shall line up either side of the officials, at the half way line and the visiting team shall move towards the home team, when both teams will shake hands.

10. **Unforeseen Circumstances**

The IFA Premiership Management Committee shall be empowered to take decisions on all matters not provided for in these rules and such decision shall be final.

Should a club be disqualified from the competition at any stage and for any reason whatsoever the club concerned shall forfeit all claims to any monetary award to which it may have otherwise been entitled.

Clubs competing in the Semi-Finals and Final stages of the competition at neutral venues are advised to inspect the ground facilities, and especially the seating at such venues, prior to and immediately after each game so that any damage caused can be identified as soon as practicable.

Sponsor's Rights

Please note that under the terms of the sponsorship agreement the sponsor is entitled to four (4) perimeter board sites, two (2) on the goal-line and two (2) touch-lines in the most prominent positions possible for all games up to and including the quarter-finals. In the semi-finals the Sponsor shall be given twelve (12) advertising board sites to be positioned at the Sponsor's discretion and for the final the Sponsor shall be given exclusive rights to all perimeter board sites.

Where applicable the Sponsor will have the right to have a full-page advertisement and a full-page Sponsor's message in the match programme for each game. The content, manner and form of such advertisement to be agreed from time to time between the League club and the Sponsor. The Sponsor's logo is to be placed on the outside cover of each and every programme produced during the course of the cup competition.

Clubs are required to procure personal appearances by members of the team, the managers or other related personnel participating in the Cup Competition.

The Sponsor will have the right to use the PA system at all cup competition matches to announce the sponsor's sponsorship (wording to be set by the sponsor) and any sponsor's message as it sees fit.