

## APPEALS COMMITTEE

### Limavady United FC v NI Football League

**Ciara McReynolds (Chair), Ian Beggs, John Greer**

The Appeals Board would firstly wish to place on record its thanks to all parties in the appeal for their co-operation. In line with the procedures adopted since the Covid-19 pandemic, this matter was considered by the Appeals Board on written submission provided by the parties.

This is an appeal by Limavady United FC against the decision of the NI Football League ('NIFL') to replay a Premier Intermediate League fixture against Moyola Park FC.

The facts are as follows:

- On 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021, Limavady United FC played Moyola Park FC at the Showgrounds, Limavady. Kick-off was 3.00pm.
- After 50 minutes the floodlights at the Showgrounds failed. At this time, the game stood at 1 – 1.
- The game continued until the 82<sup>nd</sup> minute and a score line of 3-1 to Limavady. Thereafter the game was abandoned by the referee due to inadequate light.
- On 8<sup>th</sup> February 2021, NIFL confirmed the game was required to be replayed in full in accordance with Rule 14 (e) of the Premier Intermediate League Rules and Regulations 2021/2022.

#### Appeal hearing

The Appeals Board considered in detail the submissions provided by Limavady United FC, NIFL and the Premier Intermediate League Rules 2021/2022.

Of relevance is Rule 14 (e), which states:

*"any match not completed may be ordered to stand as a completed fixture, or the unfinished time may be ordered to be played, or the fixture ordered to be replayed in its entirety as the Management Committee or Executive Committee may see fit"*

The Appeals Board understands NIFL intend to rely upon this rule to require Limavady FC to replay the match in full.

Of further and important relevance is Rule 15 (a) and (b), which states:

*"(a) The hour of kick-off for all Saturday fixtures shall be 3.00pm unless otherwise directed by the NIFL Premier Intermediate League Management Committee, or agreed by the two competing clubs and approved by the NIFL Premier Intermediate League Management Committee.*

*(b) Where clubs do not have adequate floodlighting, kick-off time shall be 2.00pm during the months on November, December and January"*

**In accordance with Rule 15 (a), the Appeals Board would emphasise that the game was required to kick off at 3.00pm as directed by NIFL.** In accordance with Rule 15 (b), there is no requirement for the game to kick-off at 2.00pm as the match occurred in February and beyond the months as stipulated within the rules.

The Appeals Board understand there is no requirement for a club to have floodlights. In the instance where a club does not have floodlights, the kick-off time of 3.00pm would stand. The Appeals Board is unaware as to whether other clubs were required to abandon the game due to inadequate light.

**Decision**

In accordance with Article 14, Rule 6 (e) of the Articles of Association, the Appeals Board have the authority to refer the case, or any part of it, back to the body whose decision is appealed against. On this basis, the Appeals Board would welcome NIFL to review their decision taking into consideration Rules 15 (a) and (b) of the Premier Intermediate League Rules 2021/2022.

Ends.