

SFAI INTER-LEAGUE

Competition Rules for Season 2025-26

1. The SFAI Inter Leagues (Boys & Girls) to be run for 2025-26 season at
 - a) U-12 (2014 players)
 - b) U-13 (2013 players)
 - c) U-14 (2012 players)
 - d) U-15 (2011 players)
 - e) U-16 (2010 players)
2. The Under-12 age group will be played as a 9-a-side competition, while age groups U-13 to U-16 will follow the 11-a-side format.
3. Cup, Bowl, Shield, and Trophy competitions will be held, subject to sufficient entries in each age category.
4. National Coordinator and Leagues will be responsible for the management of the competition and issue of fixtures.
5. The fixture dates for the respective rounds will be determined and issued by the SFAI Executive Committee.
6. The home league is responsible for informing both the coordinator and the opposing team of all fixture details, including date, venue, and kick-off time, with no less than seven days' advance notice.
7. No League(s) can unilaterally cancel, postpone, or alter a scheduled fixture without prior approval from the SFAI. Any League that proceeds with such changes without the required consent will be deemed in breach of this regulation and may be subject to sanctions imposed by the SFAI Executive Committee.
8. Teams finishing level on points at the end of the group stages are separated for qualifying positions by the following formula in this order:
 - a) The result of the group game between the respective teams (head-to-head).
 - b) Where any group game ends in a draw, after normal time, a penalty shoot-out shall take place. The result of which shall only be considered where teams cannot be separated using 7(a) above for group qualifying position. (banked penalties).
 - c) Drawing of lots will be used if any of the above fail to separate teams. (drawing of lots)
9. All-weather pitches shall be used if they are following current FAI/FIFA rules on such pitches.
10. Once a League has been included in the group fixtures, any walkover conceded will result in a fine of €250 per occurrence.
11. Concession of a walkover will result in a 3–0 score being awarded against the conceding team in each instance.
12. In all knockout fixtures that end in a draw, the outcome shall be decided on the day via extra time (10 minutes each half) followed, if required, by penalty kicks in accordance with FIFA's rules on penalty shoot-outs.
13. SFAI InterLeague Match Cards must be used for all games.
 - a) Upon completion of fixtures, these match cards must be returned to the SFAI in digital format.
 - b) All team sheets and match reports must be submitted as a scanned copy or clear image to teamsheets@sfai.ie

- c) Any supplementary match reports should also be sent to this email address. All documents must be submitted within 48 hours of the fixture taking place.

14. Squad Size:

- a) For 11-a-side teams (U-13 to U-16), each squad shall comprise 20 players named on the match card.
 - i. Winners and runners-up medals will be awarded to a maximum of 20 players from each League participating in a Final.
- b) For 9-a-side teams (U-12), each squad shall comprise 18 players named on the match card.
 - i. Winners and runners-up medals will be awarded to a maximum of 18 players from each League participating in a Final.

15. Squad Designation Rule (A, B, C, D teams as applicable)

- a) Each league / team must submit separate squad lists for their A and B teams—along with any additional squads (C, D, etc.)—prior to the commencement of their respective competitions.
- b) All squad lists must be submitted in the format prescribed by the SFAI.
- c) Failure to submit squad lists in advance, or submission of incomplete or inaccurate lists, may result in penalties including fines, points deductions, or disqualification.
- d) Players must participate only with their designated squad. Breaches of this rule may lead to penalties including fines, points deductions, or disqualification.

16. Substitutions shall operate on a roll-on, roll-off basis. All players named on the match card are eligible to participate.

17. Entries are accepted strictly on the condition that each League fields a separate and viable team for every age group entered. Leagues must also commit to fulfilling all fixtures in each age category independently, without reliance on or conflict with fixtures in other age groups within the competition.

18. Where fixtures are postponed, or postponed due to weather or pitch conditions, or where a game has been started and abandoned due to weather or pitch conditions, home advantage will be conceded for the re-fixture.

19. Inter-League fixtures must not conflict with SFAI National Cup/Trophy fixtures. If necessary, Inter-League games should be scheduled on the same weekend as the SFAI National Cup/Trophy fixtures to ensure that the latter can be facilitated.

20. InterLeague Discipline:

- a) Reports of disciplinary misconduct shall be reviewed by a committee comprising three current and impartial members of the SFAI Council. This committee will consider referee reports and any other submitted accounts of misconduct.
- b) Any player or official shown a red card by the match referee will be automatically suspended for their next game in the Inter-League competition in which the dismissal occurred.
- c) The disciplinary committee reserves the right to increase the sanction where deemed appropriate.
- d) If the suspension cannot be served in the relevant Inter-League fixture, the player or official will instead be suspended from their next competitive match at the age group in which they are registered, regardless of competition.
- e) It is the responsibility of the League, not the SFAI or any other football body, to ensure that all automatic and extended suspensions following a red card are properly enforced.
- f) Each League or team participating in these competitions is accountable for the conduct of its players, managers, coaches, assistants, parents, and supporters. Any misconduct involving these individuals will be treated as a disciplinary matter by the SFAI and may result in sanctions as determined by the disciplinary committee.

21. Postponements due to international duty will only be granted when a single team has either two outfield players or its goalkeeper involved in official international commitments. Players listed on any

form of “standby” will not be considered under this rule.

22. The SFAI Executive Committee reserves the right to invite or accept applications from teams located outside the SFAI’s geographical jurisdiction to participate in the competition.
23. To be eligible to enter this competition a League must be in good financial standing as per SFAI rule.
24. The SFAI Executive Committee has the power to deny entry to or remove any team/s from these competitions where a League fails to pay its relevant Team or League fees to the SFAI.
25. Duration of games as per prevailing FAI PDP playing formats.
26. The home League is responsible for appointing the referee(s) and covering their fees, with the exception of Final matches.
27. Any team that fails to complete all of its group fixtures will be deemed ineligible for further participation in the competition. This restriction will apply unless the SFAI Executive Committee determines that acceptable circumstances prevented the completion of one or more group games.
28. A player must be properly registered no later than the day before competing in an SFAI InterLeague game.
29. Leagues are required to submit all team and player registration records and details to the SFAI Executive Committee, or to any designated sub-committee, upon request.
30. Players, teams, and all associated individuals are required to cooperate with any videography or photography authorised by the SFAI for the promotion of these competitions. Such media may be published by the SFAI across digital platforms and other public channels. By entering these competitions, all participating leagues and teams grant permission to the SFAI on behalf of all individuals covered by this rule.
31. Team Colours
 - a) In all rounds except the Final, the home team is responsible for changing to an alternative set of playing colours in the event of a colour clash.
 - b) In the Final, the nominated away team must change kit if a colour clash occurs.
32. Protest
 - a) Any team in doubt as to the eligibility of its opponent’s players can make representations to the match referee at half time and/or full time to request the signatures and dates of birth of any three (3) opposition players entered on the match card.

Any team's refusal to comply with such a request will be regarded as an effort to conceal an irregularity in registration and/or the over-age status of its player(s) and constitutes a breach of this rule.
 - b) While signatures and dates of birth may be used as part of any protest regarding player(s) eligibility, they may not be the sole basis for a protest, and their absence will not preclude the filing of a protest.

All evidence, including but not limited to the signatures and dates of birth, can be presented at any subsequent protest hearing. However, this evidence cannot include photographs or videos.

 - i. Where a team is found guilty of playing an over-age player/s, and had won the relevant game, it shall forfeit that game to the opposing team and be removed from the competition from that stage. The offending team mentor/s may be suspended and their league fined, the levels of which suspension and fine will be determined by the committee dealing with the case.
 - ii. Where a team, having won the relevant game, is found guilty of playing an ineligible but not overage player/s, the game will be forfeited to the opposing team. The offending

team mentor/s may be suspended and their league liable to a fine, the levels of which suspension and fine will be determined by the committee dealing with the case.

- iii. Where a team, having lost the relevant game, is found guilty of playing an ineligible or overage player/s, the offending team mentor/s may be suspended and his/her league liable to a fine, the levels of which suspension and fine will be determined by the committee dealing with the case.

- c) Any player listed on the match card is considered subject to this rule, irrespective of whether they played in the match.
- d) Protests as to over age player/s, or any other reason, must be sent by registered post to the SFAI Secretary within three (3) days following the date of the game and be accompanied by the appropriate fee as determined by the SFAI Council at its first meeting of the season, for the purposes of this rule Saturdays, Sundays and Bank/Public Holidays and the day of the game are excluded.
- e) An exact copy of the protest must also be sent by registered post within the same time frame to the club against whom the protest is being lodged.
- f) Protest fees must be in the form of postal order or bank draft only, any such fees sent in any other form or by any other method will be declared invalid and nullify the protest. Protests received from any source other than either of the two leagues involved in the relevant game will not be dealt with.

33. All SFAI Inter-League trophies remain the sole property of the SFAI.

- a) Each League is responsible for the safekeeping of any trophy in its possession and must return it in good condition upon request.
- b) Leagues that return trophies damaged or fail to return them will be held liable for the cost of repair or replacement.

34. Overall control over these competitions rests with the SFAI Executive Committee, whose decisions shall be final.