

**Macarthur Football Association Inc  
M-League Rules 2024**

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# MACARTHUR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION INC.

## M-LEAGUE RULES 2024

### 1. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 1.1 Definitions

In these rules, defined terms (capitalised words) have the same meaning ascribed to that term in the Competitions Regulations unless the contrary intention appears, or it is defined below:

**“Association” or “MFA”** means Macarthur Football Association Inc.

**“Board”** means the body consisting of the Directors of the Association.

**“Club”** means a football club which is a Member of the Association.

**“CMC”** means the “Competitions Management Committee” established under the Competitions Regulations.

**“Competitions Manager”** means the person employed or appointed by the Association as the competitions manager of the Association. If that person is unwilling or unable to act or there is a vacancy, then the General Manager (or such other person designated by the Board) will assume the role of competitions manager.

**“Competitions Regulations”** means the MFA Competitions Regulations, as amended from time to time.

**“General Manager”** means the general manager employed or appointed by the Association from time to time, and in the case he or she is unavailable to act, then such other person(s) as directed by the Board from time to time.

#### 1.2 Interpretation

In these rules:

- (a) a reference to a function includes a reference to a power, authority and duty;
- (b) a reference to the exercise of a function includes, where the function is a power, authority or duty, a reference to the exercise of the power or authority of the performance of the duty;
- (c) words importing the singular include the plural and vice versa;
- (d) words importing any gender include the other genders;
- (e) the words “include”, “including”, “for example” or “such as” are not used as, nor are they to be interpreted as, words of limitation, and, when introducing an example, do not limit the meaning of the words to which the example relates to that example or examples of a similar kind;
- (f) references to persons include corporations and bodies politic;
- (g) references to a person include the legal personal representatives, successors and permitted assigns of that person;

- (h) headings (including those in brackets at the beginning of paragraphs) are for convenience only and do not affect the interpretation of this Constitution;
- (i) a reference to a statute, ordinance, code or other law includes regulations and other statutory instruments under it and consolidations, amendments, re-enactments or replacements of any of them (whether of the same or any legislative authority having jurisdiction); and
- (j) a reference to "writing" will, be construed as including references to printing, lithography, photography and other modes of representing or reproducing words in a visible form, including messages sent by electronic mail.

Any question or issue relating to the interpretation of these rules will be decided by the CMC (and whose decision will be final and binding).

### **1.3 Severance**

If any provision of these rules or any phrase contained in it is invalid or unenforceable, the phrase or provision is to be read down if possible, so as to be valid and enforceable, and otherwise will be severed to the extent of the invalidity or unenforceability, without affecting the remaining provisions of these rules.

### **1.4 Inconsistencies**

If any provision of these rules is inconsistent with the Constitution or any other regulation of the Association, then the document as directed by the Board will prevail to the extent of any such inconsistency.

## **2. COMPETITONS REGULATIONS**

In the absence of a specific M-League rule set out in this document, the Competition Regulations will apply.

## **3. FEES**

All fees and benefits applicable to the M-League Competition are outlined in the **Fees and Benefits Schedule** annexed to these rules.

## **4. REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS**

All players and coaches participating in the M-League Competition must be registered and financial on the National Registration System prior to round 1 of the M-League season to be eligible to take the field.

## **5. TEAMS**

- (a) All M-League Divisions will consist of one (1) team per Club.
- (b) Each team can nominate a maximum of 18 players for the First Grade.
- (c) Each team can nominate a maximum of 18 players for the Reserve Grade.
- (d) Each team can nominate a maximum of 18 players for a Women's M-League team.
- (e) Each team can nominate a maximum of 18 players for an U21's M-League team (M-League Colts). M-League Colts Competition is for players under the age of 21 years as at 1 January in the calendar year of competition
- (f) No overaged players are permitted to participate in the U21s M-League competition.

- (g) Selected M-League games, as approved by the Association, may be played on the Association's ground at Lynwood Park.

## **6. APPAREL**

- (a) Playing shirts must be numbered and only registered colours of the Club may be worn by all M-League teams as approved by the Association.
- (b) All playing shirts must have:
  - (i) the logo of the Club on the left chest; and
  - (ii) the league sponsor logo of the Association on both the right chest and left sleeve of the player jerseys.

## **7. WITHDRAWALS AND FORFEITS**

- (a) Withdrawal from any M-League competition at any stage after the first fixture is released by the Association carries a \$1,000 fine per team which will be payable by the Club unless otherwise determined by the CMC at its absolute discretion due to exceptional circumstances.
- (b) Match forfeits by a team carry a \$500 fine in the first instance, and \$1,000 in the second instance in the same season for all M-League Competitions and which will be payable by the relevant Club unless otherwise determined by the CMC at its absolute discretion due to exceptional circumstances.
- (c) In squad divisions, no First-Grade fixture may be forfeited without a corresponding forfeit in the Reserve Grade Fixture.
- (d) The CMC may decide that any team that forfeits a third time in a season may be withdrawn from the M-League Competition and/or an additional fine of \$500 will be imposed.

## **8. GAME CHANGE REQUESTS**

- (a) Clubs will be provided with a draft season fixture and a 5-day window to request fixture changes prior to the M-League season commencing. All such requested changes must be lodged in writing to the Competitions Manager.
- (b) The Competitions Manager will use his or her best endeavours to fulfil requests during the period referred to above, however there will be no guarantees made.
- (c) No further game change requests will be permitted, unless in exceptional circumstances, which is at the sole discretion of the Competitions Manager.
- (d) An administration fee of \$50.00 per occurrence will apply to any approved game change request.

## **9. PLAYER RECOGNITION**

M-League Awards will be for all divisions and will recognise the following:

- (a) **Golden Boot:**
  - (i) Awarded to the top goal scorer in each Division.

- (ii) The top goal scorer is determined by review of weekly match cards. It is imperative that goal scorers are accurately recorded by clubs each week to maintain the integrity of the award.
- (iii) Players who receive a straight red card during a match and are subsequently suspended will be ineligible for the Award. Players who receive a one match caution accumulation suspension (as a result of 5 yellow cards) remain eligible for this award. Additional caution suspensions will deem the player ineligible for the award.

(b) **Player of the Year**

- (i) Awarded to the best and fairest player in each League.
- (ii) The referee awards 3 votes, 2 votes and 1 vote to the players they regard as respectively the best, second best and third best player in the match.
- (iii) The player that tallies the most points at the end of the season will be deemed the Player of the Year.
- (iv) Players who receive a straight red card during a match and are subsequently suspended will be ineligible for the Award. Players who receive a one match caution accumulation suspension (as a result of 5 yellow cards) remain eligible for this award. Additional caution suspensions will deem the player ineligible for the award.
- (v) Goalkeepers are ineligible for this award.

(c) **Goalkeeper of the Year:**

- (i) Awarded to goalkeepers across all Leagues.
- (ii) Referees to rate the performance of the primary goalkeepers of both teams in each match across all leagues on a scale of 5-1 being: 5 (outstanding performance), 4 (very good performance), 3 (Good performance), 2 (average performance), 1 (below average performance) or 0 (unsatisfactory performance / behaviour) at the conclusion of each match.
- (iii) The number of clean sheets kept by the **top five-rated goalkeepers:**

Clean sheet ranking	Points
First	10 points
Second	8 points
Third	6 points
Fourth	4 points
Fifth	2 points

- (iv) The goalkeeper that tallies the most points at the end of the season will be deemed the Goalkeeper of the Year
- (v) Players who receive a straight red card during a match and are subsequently suspended will be ineligible for the Award. Players who receive a one match caution accumulation suspension (as a result of 5 yellow cards) remain eligible for this award. Additional caution suspensions will deem the player ineligible for the award.

(d) **Team of the Year:**

- (i) Two awards (Male Team of the Year and Women's Team of the Year).
- (ii) Team of the Year represents the best 11 performed players during the season across all Men's Leagues (for Men's Team of the Year) and across the Womens' league.
- (iii) These teams are honorary and do not play any games.
- (iv) No players who have received a suspension during the season will be eligible to be selected in the Team of the Year.

(e) **Fair Play Award:**

- (i) Will be awarded to the team with the fewest points on the fair play ladder at the conclusion of the regular season of each M-League Division.
- (ii) The award recognises teams that have consistently played within the laws of the game and aims to reduce the number of indiscretions.
- (iii) Points are awarded as follows:
  - 4 points – Direct Red Card
  - 3 points – Second Caution Red Card
  - 2 points – Yellow Card
  - 1 point – Guilty of any offence which is deemed to have brought the game into disrepute.

(f) **Coach of the year:**

- (i) The Coach of the Year will be awarded across all Divisions and will be determined by:
  - (A) votes cast by each M-League coach at the conclusion of the season. Coaches will give three votes to the coach they adjudge to have performed the best over that season, two to the second-best, and one to the third best (weighted at 25%)
  - (B) Coaches are unable to award themselves any votes.
  - (C) The position of the team on the table at the conclusion of the premiership season (weighted at 50%).

Position on table	Points
Premiers	8 points
Second	7 points
Third	6 points
Fourth	5 points
Fifth	4 points
Sixth	3 points
Seventh	2 points
Eighth	1 point

- (D) The position of the team on the Fair Play Ladder (weighted at 25%).

Position on table	Points
Premiers	8 points

Second	7 points
Third	6 points
Fourth	5 points
Fifth	4 points
Sixth	3 points
Seventh	2 points
Eighth	1 point

- (ii) The Coach with the most points will be deemed the Coach of the Year.
- (iii) Should a Coach be sent from the field of play during a match or is otherwise sanctioned for behaviour breaches, that Coach is ineligible for the Coach of the Year Award.

(g) **Referee of the year:**

To determine Referee of the Year, the MDFRA will nominate 3 referees per award category to be voted upon by the relevant teams at the end of the season.

**10. BORROWING**

- (a) Players registered in an M-League squad (M-League Div 1 and M-League Reserves) may play in either grade throughout the season.
- (b) Borrowing of players from lower divisions within the Club is permitted. A maximum of four (4) players can be borrowed at any one time.
- (c) Players outside of the M-League competition are permitted to be borrowed into an M-League team and play up to seven (7) matches in a higher age or division in any one season. Any player exceeding these requirements automatically become a member of the team with which he/she plays their seventh (7<sup>th</sup>) match. Maximum times borrowed restrictions also apply to M-League Colts players used in the M-League Firsts or Reserve Grade teams.  
  
***Note:** A player's "times borrowed" in an M-League team does not count towards borrowing limits in a lower division outside the M-League competitions.*
- (d) Players borrowed from lower all age divisions and down to under 17's must be aged 16 as of 1 January in the calendar year of the M-League season. (Exceptions to age restrictions may apply as per Competition Regulations 17g)
- (e) Players must fall in the age specific criteria to play in the M-League Colts team. .
- (f) Players registered in a competition of ages 35 and over cannot be borrowed into the M-League Competition.

**11. OTHER RULES**

- (a) Interchange rules apply throughout the M-League.
- (b) The Sin-Bin Rule applies throughout the M-League.
- (c) M-League Div 1 teams are to start a match with a minimum of 11 players otherwise a forfeit will result (see Forfeit Rule 7c which also applies in the event of the M-League Div 1 team forfeits due to the minimum player rule).
- (d) Serving of Suspensions: A suspension is to be served within the grade/competition where the offence took place, and whilst under suspension the player is ineligible to participate in any other competition e.g. if a player is sent from the field in an M-

League Reserve match and subsequently receives a four match suspension, said suspension is to be served in the M-League Reserve Grade competition – player is ineligible to participate in the M-League First Grade until the total length of suspension is served (player remains ineligible to participate in any matches in the round that the suspension is finalised i.e. if suspension is served in the Reserve Grade the player is ineligible to participate in the first-grade competition that same round).

- (e) The Premiers of the Men’s and Women’s First Grade, and the Premiers in the Colts shall be the Association’s representatives in the appropriate Football NSW “Champion of Champions” competition.
- (f) Match days/times may vary and may not be consistent due to Club preferences being considered. Teams are to make themselves available for all matches as scheduled by the MFA Competitions Department. Draws will be issued in sufficient time for personal plans to be altered.

## **12. COMPETITION STRUCTURE**

In line with Competitions Regulations document – see section 13.

## **13. FINALS SERIES**

- (a) Finals series regulations are as detailed in the MFA Competition Regulations document (see section 14), with the following additional regulations that are specific to the M-League competition.
- (b) To qualify for the Reserve Grade Finals Series, an allocated ML Squad player must have played at least 50% of their total number of matches in the Reserve Grade team during the M League Reserves Regular Season.
- (c) Under exceptional circumstances, an exception to rule 13b , may be considered to allow an M-League Division 1 goalkeeper to participate in M-League Reserves Finals Series without meeting the qualification criteria. For example, if the M-League Reserves keeper has suffered a long-term injury or is unavailable for finals matches. Determination will be undertaken by the Competitions Manager in consultation with the Competitions Manager.
- (d) There is no qualification period for a Reserve Grade player to participate in the First Grade Finals series.
- (e) Finals Series Qualification period for players outside the M-League squad or M-League Colts teams is as per normal competition regulations.

## **14. CMC REVIEW**

The CMC may, in consultation with the Competitions Manager, amend or add to these rules during the M-League Season but may only do so in exceptional circumstances.

**15. FEES AND BENEFITS SCHEDULE**

<b>PLAYER REGISTRATION FEES</b>		
	<b>U18</b>	<b>SENIORS (19+)</b>
<b>FFA National Registration Fee</b>	\$ 14.50	\$ 34.00
<b>Football NSW Registration Fee</b>	\$ 25.00	\$ 90.00
<b>Macarthur FA Registration Fee</b>	\$ 82.00	\$105.00
<b>Total 2023 Fee</b>	<b>\$ 121.50</b>	<b>\$ 229.00</b>

All fees and charges listed below are GST inclusive.

<b>COMPETITION FEES</b>	
<b>TEAM NOMINATION FEES</b>	
<b>M-League Men's First Grade</b>	\$ 800.00
<b>M-League Women's Premier League</b>	\$ 800.00
<b>M-League Men's Reserve Grade</b>	\$ 650.00
<b>M-League Men's U21 (Colts)</b>	\$ 600.00

<b>PLAYER TRANSFERS AND REGRADES</b>	
<b>Player Transfers</b>	\$ 30.00
<b>Regrades</b>	\$ 30.00
<b>OTHER FEES</b>	
<b>Membership Fee</b>	\$55.00
<b>Non-attendance at monthly Club Meetings</b>	\$20.00 per person. No GST applicable
<b>Competition Withdrawal</b>	\$1,000
<b>Forfeits</b>	As outlined in Rule 7
<b>Approved Game Change Requests</b>	\$50

All fees and charges listed are GST inclusive.

<b>INCLUSIONS</b>	
10 X Tickets to the M-League Awards Night for all M-League teams 5 x Deploy Ignite Match Balls for each team	
<b>PRIZE MONEY</b>	
<b>M-League Men's First Grade</b>	<b>\$8,000 Pool</b> \$5,000 Premiers \$3,000 Champions
<b>M-League Women's Premier League</b>	<b>\$8,000 Pool</b> \$5,000 Premiers \$3,000 Champions
<b>M-League Men's Reserve Grade</b>	<b>\$3,000 Pool</b> \$2,000 Premiers \$1,000 Champions
<b>M-League Men's U21 (Colts)</b>	<b>\$1,500 Pool</b> \$1,000 Premiers \$500 Champions

GST inclusive.