

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTIONS/BY-LAWS FOR THE 2023/2024

WESTERN REGIONAL SECOND DIVISION MIDDLE LEAGUE

1.0 TITLE

The Regulations shall be known as the Regional Football Association (RFA) Administrative Instructions/byelaws and shall be applied to all football matches organized by the RFA for the Second Division Clubs in the Middle league.

2.0 CONTROL OF THE GAME

The control of football in the Region is vested in the RFA

3.0 LAWS OF THE GAME

All matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the game as issued by GFA, CAF and FIFA.

4.0 CONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION

The Second Division Middle League organized in the Western Region by the RFA shall be opened to clubs for participation after becoming champions in their respective groups.

5.0 REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS

5.1 Registration of players must be in accordance with prevailing/current GFA regulations

5.2 Where a club seeks to register a player who has been duly transferred to it from club within GFA it shall, in addition to satisfying the necessary requirement of the GFA Regulations of Registration of players, submit to RFA Secretariat before registration, the following:

a) A letter from the former club (the last club of the player before being transferred to the current club) to the R.F.A with explicit instructions to the effect that THIS PLAYER 'A' HAS BEEN TRANFERRED BY US – THE CLUB 'C' TO CLUB "Z"

b) Player's license 'A' from releasing club

5.3. Each club must have a squad list of thirty (30) players and shall be submitted to the RFA office a week before the start of the middle league failure to meet the deadline attract a fine of ¢200.00.

6.0 COLOURS/STRIPS

6.1. Each club shall register a home and away colors

A team shall always appear in the home colors when playing home. However,

- a) Where both teams appear in their first colors which are similar, the away team shall change their color.
- b) Where the clash affects the goalkeeper's color, the goalkeeper must change to the alternative color.

6.2 Every team shall carry in addition its home strip for away matches.

6.0 NUMBER OF CLUBS AND CHAMPION

6.1(a) Each Club shall submit to the RFA not more than thirty (30) players for the middle league.

(b) The Division Two Middle League for the 2023/2024 season shall be opened to sixteen (16) Clubs in Four (4) group of Four (4) clubs each from the Four (4) Zones.

6.2 (a) The Champion clubs from the groupings of each of the four groups shall qualify to the Semi Finals of the Middle League thence the winners to the finals and the Champion is promoted to the Division One League.

6.3 (a) There shall be all play all in the group stage and the club which has scored the highest number of points at the end (in each grouping) shall be declared the champion.

(b) In the event there is a tie in a match in the group stage, a penalty shoot-out shall be played to declare a winner. The winner is awarded two (2) point and the loser is awarded one (1) point.

6.4 If two or more teams obtain the same number of points at the end of the competition, their ranking shall be determined as follows and in the stated order:

(a) Greater number of points obtained in matches between the clubs concerned during the competition.

(b) Goal difference resulting from the match(es) between the teams concerned.

(c) Greater number of goals scored in the match(es) between the teams concerned.

(d) In the event there is still a tie after the application of all the above, the RFA shall organize a penalty shoot-out between/or amongst the teams concerned.

6.5 The RFA shall present the Championship Cup to the Middle League Champion which shall keep it for one football season. The club shall be responsible for the upkeep and return of the Cup to the Association not later than thirty (30) days or six (6) matches to the end of the season.

6.6 Any Division Two League Cup shall always remain the property of the RFA.

7.0 VENUE

7.1 A place shall not be used as venue for league matches unless, it has been approved by the RFA to be used as such.

7.2 The RFA may order the closure of venue where the safety of clubs, match officials and/or spectators cannot be guaranteed.

7.3 The RFA shall screen players and/or spectators of various teams before they are allowed entry to the venue.

8.0 POSTPONEMENT OF MATCHES

8.1 Request for the postponement of a match (es) shall not be granted by the RFA except, on the grounds of force majeure or some other sufficient cause.

8.2 Where a match is postponed or abandoned on the grounds of bad weather or other sufficient cause, it shall be replayed within 24 hours of the scheduled date, unless the RFA determines otherwise.

8.3 Further to the above provision, in the case of a match being abandoned as a result of force majeure after it has already kicked-off, the following principles shall apply:

(a) the match shall recommence at the minute at which play was interrupted rather than being replayed in full, and with the same score line.

(b) the match shall recommence with the same players on the pitch and substitutes available as when the match was abandoned.

(c) no additional substitutes may be added to the list of players on the start list.

(d) the teams can make only the number of substitutions to which they were still entitled when the match was abandoned.

(e) players sent off during the abandoned match cannot be replaced.

(f) any sanctions imposed before the match was abandoned shall remain valid for the remainder of the match.

(g) the kick-off time, date and location shall be decided by the RFA.

9.0 WITHDRAWAL OF CLUBS FROM COMPETITIONS/MATCHES

9.1 A club shall be liable for misconduct if it withdraws from a competition after the competition has started without just cause.

9.2 Any club intending to withdraw from any competition must give notice of its intention to do so to the RFA not later than fourteen (14) days before the commencement of the competition. Should a club fail to comply with this Regulation the RFA shall have the power to compel such offending club to refund any expenses incurred and take such further action as it may deem fit.

9.3 Without prejudice to any provision in these Regulations, the RFA Disciplinary Committee shall have the right to take appropriate disciplinary decisions, including but not limited to an imposition of a ban or a demotion, against any club which withdraws from a competition or fails to honour two (2) matches without just cause and may also, ban officials of the club from taking part in football activities for a specified period.

9.4 A club failing to give satisfactory reason for withdrawing without first obtaining the consent of the RFA, shall not be allowed to enter the competition for a number of seasons to be determined by the RFA.

9.5 Where a club withdraws from the league after it has started, any match which that club is scheduled to play shall be considered forfeited. All points accrued from played matches shall be deducted from the clubs concerned and the withdrawal club sanctioned accordingly.

10.0 PLAYER LICENCE

10.1 Clubs participating in any official match sanctioned by the association shall always take with them to the football field the licenses of participating players duly issued by the GFA.

10.2 The Referee, the Assistant Referees and the Captains of the two clubs shall inspect the player licenses before the commencement of each match.

10.3 A match **shall** be played even if the licenses of some players are not available for inspection. In such an instance, a group photograph of the Referee, the Captain of the opposing side and the player(s) concerned **shall** be taken and submitted to the RFA Secretariat within two (2) hours after the match has been played either by the Match Commissioner or the defaulting club(s).

10.4 Where the defaulting team fails to produce the license of the player(s) concerned either in hard copy or by email within the stipulated two (2) hours, the defaulting team shall be fined an amount of GH¢500.00.

11.0 FOOTBALLS

Football used in all official matches must conform to the requirements of the Laws of the Game or any other match ball approved and provided by the RFA.

12.0 KICK-OFF/MATCH COORDINATION MEETING

Match coordination meetings shall be done for all the teams in the groups at the venue a day before the start of the middle league competition.

12.1 Unless otherwise directed by the RFA:

(a) League matches shall kick-off at a time scheduled on the league fixtures and TEAMS shall report to the Match Officials in the dressing rooms or such places as may be determined by the Match Officials, at least sixty (60) minutes before kick-off.

The match day countdown shall be as follows:

Match day countdown

- i. Arrival of the Commissioner and official cameraperson - 1hr.30mins.
- ii. Arrival of the Referees/Assistant Referees, teams meet up with officials to co-ordinate release of line up forms -1 hour
- iii. Line up forms to be handed out to teams - 55mins.
- iv. Collection of completed line up forms - 45mins.
- v. Teams' warm-up on the pitch - 40 mins
- vi. Final inspection of the pitch - 18mins.
- vii. Teams wait at the tunnel ready to come onto the pitch - 10mins.
- viii. Check on players' equipment - 10mins.
- ix. Entry of the teams onto the pitch - 8mins.
- x. Team photographs - 5mins.
- xi. Toss of coin - 2mins.
- xii. Kick-off - 0

(b) A breach of any of the timelines stated in the countdown under 12.1(a) shall attract at least a fine of Five Hundred Ghana Cedis (GH¢500.00).

12.2 (a) The Match Coordination meeting shall start at 10:00am a day before the commencement of the middle league competition. For the avoidance of doubt, any club that reports after the determined start time shall be considered to be late. A club shall be deemed to be absent, if the club fails to report during the meeting.

(b) A club that reports late for a match coordination meeting shall be liable to a fine of GH¢300.00.

(c) A club that fails to attend a Match Coordination meeting without reasonable excuse shall be liable to a fine of GH¢500.00.

13.0 DURATION OF MATCHES

13.1 Each match shall last ninety (90) minutes, comprising two (2) periods/halves of forty-five (45) minutes each with an interval of not more than fifteen (15) minutes. Clubs are permitted to make five (5) substitutions in a game, in three opportunities.

The Referee shall allow for time wasted or lost through incidents or other sufficient cause.

13.2 The Referee is the sole judge of time including, time lost through incident or other sufficient cause and his decision on this matter shall not be subject to protest or appeal.

13.3 At the end of the first half, the referee and the assistant referees shall follow all the players off the field.

14.0 ABSENCE OF A MATCH COMMISSIONER/REFEREE

14.1 In the absence of the appointed Match Commissioner, the Referee shall act.

14.2 Where the Referee and/or one or both of the Assistant Referees do not show up, the RFA shall arrange for alternative officials from the RFA-approved Referees list.

14.3 Any official(s) who fails to report for a match without reasonable notice, shall be liable to sanctions which may include striking of his/their name(s) from the referee's list.

15.0 UNQUALIFIED PLAYER

15.1 An unqualified player is:

(a) Any player not registered by the GFA who appears for a club in any official match. Without prejudice to any measure required to rectify the sporting consequences of such an appearance, sanctions may also be imposed on the player and/or the Club. The right to impose such sanctions lies in principle with RFA.

- (b) A player suspended by the RFA and/or GFA from participating in football competitions indefinitely or for a specific period.
- (c) A player banned from participating in the RFA and/or GFA competitions by GFA, WAFU, CAF or FIFA.
- (d) A player who has registered for more than one club or with any club registered with another National Association.
- (e) A player who has received a caution in three league matches.
- (f) A player who has received a direct red card in a match and has not missed the required number of matches and/or paid the related fine.
- (g) A player who has received two cautions in the same match and has not missed the next match and/or paid the related fine.

15.2 (a) An unqualified player shall not take part in any match for which he is unqualified to play.

(b) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provision of this Article, the RFA shall in all cases, locate and punish the guilty party/parties. In the event of the player being the sole guilty party, the results of the match which he played shall stand.

(c) A player guilty of double or multiple registrations shall be suspended from participating in matches and competitions organized by the GFA for a period of at least one (1) year.

16.0 FORFEITURE OF MATCHES

16.1 A team commits an offence punishable by forfeiture of a match where:

- (a) if it fails to pay the 200 cedis on the stipulated period on a match day.
- (b) that team walks off the field of play or refuses to continue play;
- (c) that team positions itself in such a way as to render the progress of the game impossible or the player(s) or supporter(s) of the team initiate(s) an act responsible for the abrupt end of the match;
- (d) the team's lateness without just cause, renders continuation of the match impossible or renders it impossible for the match to travel the full 90 minutes;
- (e) it fields more than five (5) loaned players in a match or more than the required number of foreign players allowed under these Regulations;
- (f) it fields an unqualified player(s) or team official(s);

- (g) it fails to report for or honor a match without just cause;
- (h) it plays with another team a match which has been declared non-competitive or the results of which have been found to be pre-determined or fixed;
- (i) it plays in a strip that is not registered with the RFA in an official match;
- (j) it fails to pay officiating allowance and/or T&T on the stipulated period on a match day
- (k) it fails to play in the strip that is determined by the RFA for that match; and

16.2 In respect of offences (a) to (e), no matter what the scores shall be at the time of the offence or at the end of the match, the offending team shall be considered as having lost the match and accordingly, three (3) points and three (3) goals shall be awarded in favour of the other team, unless the innocent team is leading by a margin of more than three (3) goals at the time of the offence or when the match comes to an end; in which case, the scores will stand.

16.3 In respect of offence (f), the offending team shall be considered as having lost the match and accordingly, three (3) points and three (3) goals shall be awarded in favour of the other team.

16.4 (a) In respect of offence (g), the offending team shall be considered as having lost the match and accordingly, three (3) points and three (3) goals shall be awarded in favour of the other team. In addition, the defaulting club shall lose three (3) points and three (3) goals from the club's accumulated points, notwithstanding whether or not it has accumulated points. For the avoidance of doubt, it is possible for a club to have a negative points build up. The team shall lose its subsequent matches if it fails to comply with the provision stated herein.

(b) In respect of offences (h), (i) and (j), the offending team shall be considered as having lost the match and accordingly, three (3) points and three (3) goals shall be awarded in favour of the other team. In addition, the offending club shall lose three (3) points and three (3) goals from the club's accumulated points, whether or not the club has accumulated points. For the avoidance of doubt, it is possible for a club to have negative points build up.

16.5 In addition to the sanctions provided in 16.2 and 16.3 above in respect of offences 16.1(a) to 16.1(e) and 16.1(f) respectively, the following sanctions shall apply:

- (a) The defaulting club shall lose 3 points from its accumulated points from previous matches.
- (b) The club shall be fined GH¢1,000.00, 50% of which shall be paid to the opposing club.
- (c) Where the defaulting club is playing at home the transportation expenses of the opposing club shall also be paid by the defaulting club.

16.6 A team shall forfeit a match under Article 16.1 in consequence of a protest duly filed within the time limited for filing of protests under these Regulations or where the RFA discovers that a club has committed an infraction.

16.7 In respect of offence 16.1(g), the match shall be declared null and void and three (3) points shall be deducted from the accumulated points of the offending club(s).

16.8 Where each of the two clubs commits an offence that is punishable by the forfeiture of the match, the match shall be considered as having been played but with neither side being credited with any point, no matter what the score shall be at the end of the match.

16.9 Unless otherwise stated, on the forfeiture of a match by club, the innocent team shall be awarded three (3) points and three (3) goals.

16.10 Notwithstanding any provision in this Article or in any other Article in these Regulations and notwithstanding the fact that a club may not have accumulated points, the GFA shall impose the sanction of three-point deduction on the offending club. For the avoidance of doubt, it shall be possible for a club to have a negative points build-up.

16.11 In respect of offences 16.1(a), 16.1(b) and 16.1(c), the offending team shall be considered as having lost the match.

16.12 Burden of proof

a. The burden of proof regarding protests between clubs rest on the protesting club and in the case of a charge by the Prosecutor and/or RFA, the burden rests with the Prosecution.

b. In the case of a protest regarding the use of an unqualified player in the sense of Article 15.1(a), the burden of proof shall be incumbent on the protesting club and/or the GFA.

c. In the case of an anti-doping rule violation, it is incumbent upon the suspect to produce the proof necessary to reduce or cancel a sanction. For sanctions to be reduced, the suspect must also prove how the prohibited substance entered his body.

17.0 PROTESTS AND APPEALS

17.1 All Protests in respect of inter-club matches shall be forwarded in writing directly to the Secretary or Administrative Manager of the RFA not later than thirty (30) minutes from the end of the match concerned.

17.2 Such protests shall be accompanied by a protest fee of GH¢1500.00 as agreed upon by Congressmen at the Congress.

17.3 It shall be the responsibility of the RFA to serve all disciplinary processes, Protests and Statements of Defense on the appropriate parties either manually or electronically through the

official email of the parties, social media handles and/or through fax on the same day the process is received by the RFA Secretariat.

17.4 Any protest not accompanied by the appropriate protest fee within the stipulated time shall not be entertained.

17.5 A protest on the Match Report Form shall be confirmed by a Protest Form sent directly to the RFA within the stipulated time, namely thirty (30) minutes from the end of the match. The Protest Form shall be accompanied by evidence of payment of the appropriate protest fee.

17.6 (a) All protests shall be filed on appropriate forms to be provided by the RFA.

(b) Any club which files a protest in accordance with this Article of the Regulations within the time stipulated shall be required to furnish the Secretary or Administrative Manager of the RFA with the grounds of the protest and Statement of Case, together with all documentary evidence relevant to the case, citing the relevant provision(s) in the Regulations and/or Statutes.

17.7 (a) A club against whom a protest is lodged shall within thirty (30) minutes of being notified or served with a copy of the Written grounds and Statement of Case, file a Statement of Defence with the Secretary or Administrative Manager of the RFA.

(b) Filing of Statement of Defence shall be made on appropriate forms to be provided by the RFA.

17.8 (a) After the periods set for filing of the Statement of Case and Statement of Defence, the Disciplinary Committee shall consider all the Statements of the parties and deliver its judgement immediately.

(b) The decision of the Disciplinary Committee shall be based on the Statements and/or evidence filed by the parties. However, if in the opinion of the Disciplinary Committee, further evidence is required to assist in the determination of the case, the Disciplinary Committee may take such evidence before the delivery of its decision.

(c) The Disciplinary Committee shall consider the merits of a case and deliver its decision in any given case, even if a party fails, neglects or refuses to file a Statement of Defence within the stipulated time.

(d) All clubs agree that their right to a hearing before the judicial bodies of the RFA are expressed by filing of a Statement of Case, a Statement of Defence and any further evidence given before the said bodies. Accordingly, representations made through their Statements shall be deemed final and conclusive of the factual and legal basis of their cases.

(e) The procedures laid down for cases before the RFA Disciplinary Committee shall apply to the GFA Disciplinary Committee sitting as Appeals Committee.

17.9 Any club dissatisfied or aggrieved by a decision of the RFA Disciplinary Committee of the GFA may appeal against such decision within one (1) day of being notified in writing.

17.10 Appeals from the RFA Disciplinary Committee and Ethics Committee shall attract a fee of GH¢500.00.

17.11 The decision of the GFA Disciplinary Committee sitting as Appeals Committee in any matter shall be final, provided that the GFA Disciplinary Committee sitting as Appeals Committee shall have power to review its own decision suo motu.

17.12 The RFA Disciplinary Committee and the GFA Disciplinary Committee sitting as Appeals Committee may communicate their decisions directly to the clubs, officials or players concerned at their respective sittings. The RFA shall immediately, communicate in writing the decisions of the Committees to the parties involved when ready.

17.13 Where the RFA Disciplinary Committee or the GFA Disciplinary Committee sitting as Appeals Committee is satisfied that a protest or appeal is frivolous, the Committee shall dismiss it and may impose the necessary fine and/or costs.

17.14 (a) An appeal does not operate as a Stay of Execution or have a suspension effect except, with regard to orders to pay a sum of money.

(b) An application for a Stay of Execution shall be filed within thirty (30) minutes after being notified in writing of the decision being appealed against and shall be filed by an application letter addressed to the General Secretary indicating the reasons in support of the application.

(c) An application for a Stay of Execution shall not operate as a stay of the decision being appealed against until or unless, the Committee whose decision is being appealed against may otherwise, order. The Chairman or the Vice Chairman or a Member of the Committee designated by the Chairman shall decide on the application for Stay of Execution on the same day the application is made.

(d) Any application for a Stay of Execution shall be heard by the Committee after the aggrieved party has paid the appropriate fee of One Hundred Ghana Cedis (GH¢100.00).

(e) A repeat application for a Stay of Execution Pending Appeal shall be heard by the Appeals Committee after the aggrieved party has paid the appropriate fee of Two Hundred and Fifty Ghana Cedis (GH¢250.00)

18.0 CAUTIONS

18.1 RED AND YELLOW CARDS

A player who receives the red card (sent off) shall be suspended from participation in three (3) consecutive league matches including the match in which he was sent off. In addition, he shall pay a fine of Ghs 100.00 before he becomes eligible to play after serving the ban.

18.2 A player who receives three cumulative yellow cards (cautions) shall be suspended from participating in one (1) match and a fee of Ghs 75.00 paid before he is eligible to play.

18.3 A player expelled by the referee or any other degree of offence shall be dealt with in accordance with GFA regulations.

18.4 A second bookable offence (ie. Yellow cards followed by red card) incurred in the same league match shall warrant two (2) matches suspension including the match in which the player has been shown the card. A fine of Ghs 75.00 shall be paid before the player is eligible to play any match after serving the ban.

19.0 OFFICIATING ALLOWANCES / FEES AND T&T

The Officiating Allowances shall be absorbed by the Western Regional Football Association.

NB: Each club shall pay an amount of Two Hundred (200.00) Cedis on respective match days to the coordinator during the match day to cater for referees' T&T, Red Cross, Security and other miscellaneous. Clubs that fail to pay forfeit the match.

20.0 OFFENCES BY CLUB OFFICIALS AND PLAYERS

20.1. The sprinkling of water, powder or other concoctions in liquid or solid form in or around the field of play including the dressing room is forbidden and shall be punishable by a fine of Five Hundred Ceids (500.00)

20.2. The RFA shall hold clubs responsible for the misconduct of their supporters before, during and after a match.

21.0. REGISTRATION OF CLUB OFFICIALS

Each club shall complete and sign club's registration form to be provided by the RFA

21.1. The complete registration form shall include (i) the chairman (ii) the vice chairman (iii) secretary (iv) technical team

21.2 each club shall sign an under taking (pledge) FORM A&B thereby confirming its agreement and commitment to participate in the Second Division Middle League in conformity with the Administrative Instructions/Byelaws.

22.0 PROVISION OF SECURITY

The security and safety committee of the RFA shall make provision of security personnel at league venue.

22.1. For the avoidance of doubt, the security shall either be the police, military, community police, immigration or fire service. These shall be the only recognized security.

22.2 FIFA, CAF, GFA regulations would be applied where this Administrative Instruction is silent.

23.0 OTHER PROVISIONS

The WRFA Digital Media shall make provision of all media and media related contents.

23.1 All clubs must furnish the WRFA digital media with their first eleven (11) players including their jersey numbers two (2) hours before kick-off on the day of their match, failure attract a fine of ₦150.00

23.2 A video coverage by the WRFA digital media shall be made when the teams are entering the venue at all times on match day.

23.3 The Head Coaches of all clubs shall avail themselves to the WRFA digital media for post-match interview.