

Finals Series Formats & Eligibility

Accessing Finals Series Fixtures

Matches in our Finals Series can be viewed on the "Draw and Results" page. When viewing an individual division simply select the "Finals" option, which is located above the rounds selector in "Fixtures".

We are committed to have each 2016 finals round posted online by Wednesday preceding the weekend of results. If a finals game is rescheduled for a mid-week fixture, the weekends finals fixture will be uploaded the following day.

General Rules

- The 'no ID, no play' rule will be enforced for all finals.
- Grounds are to be dressed with crowd control ropes and all spectators are to remain behind the rope at all times
- Teams must bring their own Team sheet and match balls
- Only the coach or RTO of the respective teams playing will be allowed within the ropes.
- An interchange player may only enter the ropes area if he or she is involved in a substitution. All other times interchange players must remain behind the ropes unless a special technical area has been set up within the ropes area:
 - All Junior Age Groups (12-21) – 5 interchange players only
 - All senior age groups AAM, AAW, O35, O45 – 7 interchange players only
 - Men's Championship – 5 substitutes only

There is a no alcohol policy at all venues.

All player IDs will be inspected against the match sheet prior to ALL Finals Series matches.

It is the RTO's responsibility to control spectators and players at games, this includes a zero tolerance on referee abuse.

ID Cards required for Coaches and RTOs

All coaches and Registered Team Officials (RTO) of teams in the 2016 Finals Series must ensure they have their ID card visible during all matches to all officials present. This includes any team manager. If you do not have an ID card you will need to remain behind the ropes, along with spectators, during the match.

To ensure you have an ID card ready please ensure:

- You have registered as either a Coach or RTO with your Club on MyFootballClub
- Inform your Club Secretary that you are registered and require an ID Card to be printed
- Your Club Secretary will inform ESFA by 5pm Wednesday that you need a card and one will be printed by 2:00pm Thursday, before your match (to be submitted on a final list to the Competitions Coordinator)
- Either you or someone from your Club has collected your card(s) before your match

We will ensure that we have printed ID cards for every team official who requests one.

Player Eligibility

Senior Competitions

Player eligibility for the Senior Competition will be in accordance with the Competition Rules during the regular season, with the exception of the Men's Championship.

ESFA Competition rules state:

14. MEN'S CHAMPIONSHIP

F) To be eligible for playing finals in Reserve Grade a player must have played in more than or the same number of Reserve Grade fixtures than First Grade fixtures on the last 5 weekends for which they were available. A player registered in Men's All Age must have played at least 3 Reserve Grade matches to be eligible to play in Reserve Grade finals. No such restriction shall apply to First Grade.

There are no additional special rules for the Grand Finals.

Junior Competitions

A team may draw upon players for the Finals Series from an eligible lower age group or eligible lower division in the age group, provided:

- The player(s) is from the same Club;
- The player(s) has played at least one competition game during this season for that team;
- The team has insufficient registered players available because of injury
- Clubs may wish to micro manage teams, to ensure players registered to a team in the finals are considered first

Competition Rules

You can download a copy of the Competition Rules by clicking [here](#).

Procedure if scores are level at full time

If at the conclusion of a semi-final, final or grand final the scores are level, the teams shall play extra time of:

Age Group	Extra Time Period	Extra Time Format
U12/G12	5 mins each way	Golden Goal
U13-U21/G12-G18	10 mins each way	Golden Goal
AA Men, AA Women, O35, O45 and PL	15 mins each way	Classic Extra Time

- There will be a break of 5 minutes before Extra Time commences
- At the conclusion of the first half of extra time there will be no break. Both teams are asked to remain on the field and switch ends

All Junior Matches (U12-U21 & G12-G18) will use the Golden Goal rule; that is the first team to score in Extra Time shall win the match.

All Senior Matches (AA Men, AA Women, O35, O45, and Men's Championship) will use the classic extra time rule. That is, the full 30 minutes of must be played. If a team has scored more goals at the conclusion of Extra Time, they are the winner. There is NO golden goal.

Withstanding the above rules, the procedure of Extra Time will be in accordance with the FIFA Laws of the game. If no team has scored at the end of extra time, kicks from the penalty mark will take place in accordance with the [FIFA Laws of the Game](#).

Procedure during Kicks from the Penalty Mark

If the scores are level after extra time, a penalty shoot-out shall occur for ALL finals games.

- For 12 age groups, only one RTO can come into the centre circle

and direct the players in the correct procedure for penalty kicks.

- For 13 age groups and up, prior to penalty kicks, one RTO is permitted to come onto the field of play to organise penalty takers and then leave before the commencement of the penalty kicks.

The key points to remember are:

- The referee chooses which goal the kicks will be taken from
- The referee tosses a coin and the team who wins the toss shall decide whether to take the first or second kick
- The five initial kick takers must be named to the referee before the procedure begins
- All players on one team must take a kick before any player has a second kick
- Both teams must begin the kicks from the penalty mark with the same number of players. If one team has less than 11 players, the opposition must reduce their numbers to match their opposition
- A goalkeeper who is injured while kicks are being taken from the penalty mark and is unable to continue as goalkeeper may be replaced by a named substitute, provided their team has not used the maximum number of substitutes
- With the exception of the foregoing case, only players who are on the field of play at the end of the match, which includes extra time where appropriate, are eligible to take kicks from the penalty mark

Basic procedure:

- Both teams are designated 5 kicks each
- If, before both teams have taken five kicks, a team has scored more goals than the other could score, even before the team were to complete its five kicks, no more kicks are taken
- If after 5 kicks each, both teams have scored the same number of goals, a 'sudden death' shall occur
- Kicks continue to be taken alternatively and in the same order until one team has scored a goal more than the other from the same number of kicks

For a full outline of the Kicks from the Penalty Mark procedure, please see Page 45 in [FIFA Laws of the game 2015/2016](#).

Correct Player Uniform

We ask that all players are neatly dressed in accordance with competition rules, for all Finals matches. This includes:

- Wearing their full correct uniform
- No jewellery is worn

Code of Conduct

We would like to remind everyone to adhere to the relevant ESFA Codes of Conduct for coaches, managers, officials, parents and players.

You can download a copy of each Code of Conduct by clicking on each relevant party:

[Coach,](#)

[Manager/Official](#)

[Parent](#)

[Player](#)

Grand Final Matches

In addition to the above protocols, the following will additionally apply to 2016 Grand Final matches.

Pre-match Preparation

- The 'no ID, no play' rule will be enforced for all finals
- Teams are to be ready to play 15 minutes prior to kick off
- No warming up is allowed in the penalty areas
- Each team must bring their OWN match sheet and match balls to their Grand Final match
- Please ensure that player IDs and your team are ready to be inspected 15 minutes before kick off

All player IDs will be inspected by ESFA staff, against the match sheet prior to ALL Grand Finals Series matches.

Club Duties

Each club participating in a grand final will be required to provide two officials to assist on the day with managing spectators around the field.

After the conclusion of the match we ask that both teams ensure their technical area is left clean and tidy and that both teams proceed to the presentation area as quickly as possible.

This cooperation from clubs will help the day run smoothly and efficiently.

ESFA Finals FAQ

A) What happens if it rains?

Check the Wet Weather updates on the day as normal to find out if your match is still on.

1. If an individual game is washed out we will endeavour to reschedule a catch up game, most likely on the Wednesday afternoon/evening following the game. Should either team be unable to play they will be deemed to have forfeited. If bad weather or abnormal circumstances intervene and makes play impossible, then the team who had finished higher at the end of regular season will be deemed the winner and will progress to the next round. NB: This applies at all stages of the finals series (i.e. semi-final, preliminary final and grand final).
2. In the event of a whole finals round being washed out and there are no wet weather weekends available, the following principals will be applied:
 - If time permits, reschedule mid-week
 - If not possible to reschedule, the teams who finished higher at

the end of the regular season will progress to the next round.

B) Is there a Pennant Final Series?

Yes, almost all Junior teams will be involved in a Pennant Series where possible i.e. at least 2 teams outside the top four.

This will involve teams that did not qualify for the main semifinals. These games will conclude with a Pennant final and a medal ceremony for both teams involved.

C) When will finals game be notified on the website?

Our commitment is to have all final series games posted on the [ESFA website](#) by at the latest 12-noon on Wednesday preceding the game. As you understand, we don't know until Monday after the weekend who is playing. Then we need to organise times and fields for each finals game in all competitions.

As the finals series progresses we endeavour to bring this time frame forward.

IMPORTANT - please do not rely on what might be appearing on the website for games beyond the current weekend. These are usually tentative and subject to change.

D) Do we need to show IDs for Finals?

YES - If you have lost ID cards, contact the ESFA office ASAP for a replacement, via your Club Secretary, with a final list of missing cards.

E) Do we need to bring a team sheet for the Grand Finals?

YES - Please bring your team sheet to your Grand Final and ensure it has been filled out as soon as possible.

F) Do we need to bring match balls for the Finals?

YES – Both teams will need to provide match balls for all Finals Series matches.