

FUTSAL MALTA ASSOCIATION

MAY 2012

RULES GOVERNING FUTSAL COMPETITIONS

Report Issued by – FMA – Futsal Malta Association

FMA – Rules Governing Futsal Competitions – May 2012

Futsal Malta Association

Document Name:	FMA – Rules Governing Futsal Competitions		
Date of issue:	26th May 2012	Release:	Version 01
Author:	Mark Borg – FMA Vice President		
Owner:	Futsal Malta Association		
Document Number:	FMA / CR / 001		

Note: This document is only valid from the date of issue indicated above. All other versions transmitted prior to this date are to be for information purposes only

Revision History

Date of next revision:

Revision Date	Previous Revision Date	Summary of Changes	Changes Marked

Approvals

This document requires the following approvals. A signed copy should be placed in the project files.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue	Version
FMA Council			11 th July 2012	Ver 02

Distribution

This document has been distributed to:

Name	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Mr. Donald Spiteri	FMA President	26th May 2012	Ver 01
Mr. Alex Falzon	FMA Secretary	26th May 2012	Ver 01
Mr. Bjorn Vassallo	MFA CEO	26th May 2012	Ver 01
Mr. Rodney Pisani	MFA Competitions Committee Secretary	26th May 2012	Ver 01
Futsal Council Members		05 th July 2012	Ver 02

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1. ORGANISATION OF FUTSAL COMPETITIONS

1. ORGANISATION

(i) The Association will organise, on an annual basis, Futsal Competitions in the form of a National League, in which case it shall be known as the FMA Futsal National League, and/or in the form of a Knock-Out Competition, in which case it shall be known as the FMA Futsal KO Competition. In case that more than one Futsal KO Competition is organized, the name of the Division/s relative to the KO Competition concerned shall also be included in the official name.

(ii) In the case that the League and/or the KO Competition/s are sponsored by an individual or a company, the name of such individual or company may, at the discretion of the FMA, be included to the official name.

2. COMPETITIONS OF THE ASSOCIATION

(i) (a) The Council of the Association is vested with full powers to establish the competitions to be organised by the Association.

(b) The Bureau is vested with full powers to establish the manner in which the competitions organised by the Association as decided upon by the Council are to be run and managed.

(c) Any matter not provided for in these rules shall be decided by the Bureau as it may deem fit.

(d) In the running and managing of the competitions and in deciding those other matters not to be provided for by these rules, the Bureau may take into consideration the opinion of the MFA Competitions Committee.

(ii) Competitive matches shall be played in accordance with these regulations and with the other Rules, Regulations, Bye-laws and decisions of the Association and the Laws of the Game for Futsal promulgated by FIFA.

3. GUARANTEE DEPOSIT AND PENALTIES FOR EXITING A COMPETITION

(i) Clubs taking part in any of the competitions of the Association may be called upon by the Council to make a guarantee deposit which shall be refunded when the Clubs making the deposit would have completed their fixtures, discharged all their liabilities and paid the fines inflicted upon them by the Association.

(ii) Clubs which had applied to take part in a competition and later withdraw their participation from such competition prior to the commencement of such competition shall be fined. In the case of exiting the competition prior to the draws of such competition, the Club shall be penalised with a fine amounting to between one hundred euro (€100) and three hundred euro (€300). In the case of exiting the competition after the draws but prior to the commencement of the competition, the Club shall be penalised with a fine amounting to between three hundred euro (€300) and five hundred euro (€500). In establishing the fine, due consideration shall be given to the importance of the competition concerned.

4. RULES OF COMPETITIONS

(i) The Council shall establish the particular rules governing the competitions of the Association before the first Monday in May prior to the coming season. Unless any additions and/or alterations are made, rules governing particular competitions shall remain in force from one season to the other.

(ii) Additions and/or alterations to these Competition Rules and to rules of particular competitions made after the first Monday in May shall not come into force at least until the end of the coming or the current season, as the case may be.

(iii) Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-para. (ii) above, in the case of existing competitions, rules which in any way may affect promotion and/or relegation issues shall not come into force at least until the commencement of the second season following the coming or current season, as the case may be.

(iv) The provisions of sub-clauses (ii) and (iii) above shall not apply if at least 2/3 (two-thirds) of the Council decide otherwise.

5. DRAWS OF COMPETITIVE MATCHES

(i) The Bureau is vested with full powers to lay down the procedure to be adopted in the draws of the matches of all the competitions of the Association.

(ii) The Bureau shall fix the date and time of the draws, which must be as early as possible before the commencement of a competition.

(iii) The General Secretary of the Association shall have the duty to inform the Clubs taking part in a competition of the date and time fixed for the draws and the place where the draws shall be held. He shall also cause such information to be sent to the media.

6. FIXTURES OF COMPETITIVE MATCHES

(i) All competitive matches shall, as a rule, be played on the day and at the time fixed by the Bureau. Fixture lists shall be issued under the authority of the Bureau and shall be circulated to all those interested as soon as possible after having been completed.

(ii) Alterations to fixtures may be made by the Bureau. However, the Bureau shall not entertain any request based on medical grounds for an alteration in the fixture list.

(iii) Bureau decisions regarding fixture lists and alterations thereto are final and binding and no Club, official or player shall have any right to claim any compensation for any expense, loss or damage sustained as a result of such decisions.

7. WHEN MATCHES ARE PLAYED

(i) Competitive matches may be played on any day depending on scheduling requirements and venue constraints.

(ii) Clubs which are taking part in UEFA Competitions for Clubs shall not be obliged to play other competitive matches three (3) days prior to or after their UEFA competitive match.

(iii) Clubs whose competition fixtures clash with National Team International matches, whether competitive or friendly for which players of these Clubs have been selected or included in any National Team Squad, have the right to apply to the Council for a postponement of their fixtures if the number of such selected players is more than two (2). Such applications are to be made in writing and must reach the General Secretary of the Association at least fifteen (15) days before the date of the match requiring postponement if by that time their player/s have already been selected for National Team duties or included in any National Team Squad. In all other cases, an application shall be made as soon as the Club is informed of the selection by the Association. Rule 5 (iii) is also applicable to such changes.

8. PARTICIPATION

(i) Subject to the conditions mentioned in these regulations and in the other Rules, Regulations, Bye-Laws and decisions of the Association only Member Clubs of the Malta Football Association shall have the right to take part in the Futsal Competitions organised by the Association. All participating clubs in the FMA Competitions shall be referred to as FMA Member Clubs. The Official Name, Kit Colours (Home & Away) and Official Badge of FMA Member Clubs shall be deemed to be the same as that of their parent MFA Member Club.

(ii) The FMA Council shall establish the fees payable by Member Clubs to take part in such competitions.

(iii) The playing season of the Futsal Season of the Association shall be the period from 9th June to 8th June of the following year, both days included.

2. REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY

9. GENERAL PROVISIONS

(i) Players taking part in Futsal Competitions organized by the Association shall only be eligible to participate in FMA Competitions upon obtaining their 16th birthday.

(ii) (a) All players taking part in Futsal Competitions organized by the Association may have an amateur or a professional status subject to the applicable conditions mentioned hereunder.

(b) All players taking part in Futsal Competitions organized by the Association must be male and registered with the Malta Football Association (Form E) **and** with a FMA Member Club through a FMA Registration (FMA Players Registration Form R) in accordance with these rules and/or in accordance with the other Rules, Regulations and Bye-Laws of the Association.

(c) All players may only be allowed to register with one FMA Member Club during the same season.

(iii) (a) The registration of players, with FMA, shall only be valid for one (1) season, including the season during which it is made, except for players registered at the beginning of the season who are taking part in UEFA Futsal Competition, which may be released upon exiting the competition. Such releases will have to take place up to 72 hours after competition exit and a list of the released players is to be sent to the General Secretary. No releases will be permitted after the 72 hours have elapsed.

(b) Registrations may be submitted on weekdays during normal working hours at the MFA Headquarters, until the 28th February of that particular season.

(c) FMA Member Clubs will be allowed to register a maximum of 35 players in any one season.

(iv) (a) In the event that during the season a FMA Member Club withdraws its participation from the FMA Futsal National League, or is expelled by the Disciplinary Board, the players registered with such team shall not be eligible to play Futsal for another team during that same season

(b) In the event that a MFA Member Club ceases to exist or is expelled by the MFA Disciplinary Board, its respective FMA Member Club shall also be deemed not to be eligible to take part in the FMA Competitions with immediate effect.

10. AMATEUR PLAYERS

(i) Amateur players are free to participate in the FMA Futsal competitions for any FMA Member Club of their choice, irrespective of which MFA Member Club they are registered with as football players.

11. PROFESSIONAL PLAYERS

(i) Professional players will only be allowed to participate in the FMA Futsal Competitions if registered with the Futsal Team of the MFA Member Club with whom they are registered with as football players.

(ii) Professional players who are registered with FMA to play futsal and who during the course of the season are transferred or loaned to another Member Club to play football, will not be eligible to play any longer in Futsal Competitions.

(ii) Professional Players, whose MFA Member Club they are registered with as football players, opt not to participate in the FMA Competitions, remain ineligible to play in the Futsal Competitions.

12. FOREIGN PLAYERS

(i) There is no limit on the number of foreign players - not born in Malta and who are ineligible to play for national team - to be registered with an FMA Member Club to play Futsal, however not more than three (3) such players may be listed on the Referee's Official Match Report for competitive Futsal matches.

(ii) Foreign Players who were not born in Malta but satisfy the 'Home-Grown' criteria as established by the Malta Football Association, will be eligible to play under the same criteria mentioned in above sections and not counted as a foreign player.

3. FUTSAL NATIONAL COMPETITIONS

13. FUTSAL LEAGUE

(i) The FMA Futsal National League shall be organized in Divisions and Sections depending on the number of participating teams.

(ii) Decisions regarding the formation of Divisions and Sections and the mode of play shall be taken by the Council prior to the commencement of the Futsal Competitions for the season concerned.

(iii) Prior to the commencement of the FMA Futsal National League, the Council shall decide on the number of rounds to be played in each Division and/or Section as well as on the number of teams to be promoted and relegated and on the mode of promotion and relegation from one Division to another. An FMA Member Club which had won promotion to a higher Division or which has been relegated to a lower Division in one season shall retain such status during the following season. However, in the case of vacancies in any of the Divisions of the National League, the teams that are next in line after the promoted teams in final classification will be given precedence over those which would have been relegated to a lower division.

14. FUTSAL KNOCK-OUT COMPETITION/S

(i) In the event that the Association organises a Futsal Knock-Out Competition or different Futsal Knock-Out Competitions during the season all the teams taking part in the FMA Futsal National League during the current season shall be entitled to participate in such competition/s provided that by the time-limit established by the General Secretary of the Association such teams would have confirmed in writing that these are willing to participate in such competition. If more than one Futsal Knock-Out Competition is organized, the Council shall also decide in which of each of such competitions the different teams will be able to participate. Such decision shall be based on the Division in which the teams are participating in the FMA Futsal National League.

(ii) The FMA shall decide whether in the Futsal Knock-Out Competition/s to be organized teams will be seeded or not and in case of seedings which teams will be seeded using MFA Competition Rules criteria.

15. UNPLAYED AND/OR DISCONTINUED COMPETITIVE MATCHES

(i) If a Club fails to play any match in a competition or if a competitive match, after it has started, cannot be continued either because the number of players in any one team falls below the required minimum number of players or because one of the teams either abandons the field of play or, after the half-time interval, fails to take the field of play, the Club of such team shall:

(a) be considered to have lost the match and the other Club shall be considered to have won the match if it has no fault for the match not having been played; and

(b) incur a minimum fine, as follows:

Premier Division - €50

First Division - €50

Second Division - €30

Third Division - €30

(c) be held responsible for all expenses, damages and losses; and
(d) be further dealt with by the Control and Disciplinary Board of the Association in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Association. If in the opinion of the Control and Disciplinary Board of the Association an unplayed or discontinued fixture may damage the interests of a third party Club, the Control and Disciplinary Board of the Association, in dealing with the Club/s for such an unplayed fixture, shall consider this factor as a major aggravating circumstance.

(ii) (a) If a team fails to play two (2) matches in the same competition run on a league basis, such team may be removed from that competition.

(b) In such a case the Club of the team shall be penalized with a minimum fine which shall correspond to the minimum fine which a team incurs for an unplayed fixture multiplied by the number of remaining matches of such team in that competition.

(c) When a power failure or any other defect in the lighting system occurs, the referee alone shall decide what amount of time he must wait to see whether the power may be restored or the defect corrected so that he may be able to have the match played or resumed. However, before deciding that the match cannot be played or resumed, the referee shall consult the Stadium Manager and the Match Inspector, if one had been appointed for that match, to take their opinion into consideration.

(iii) If a competitive match cannot be played or falls short of its stipulated duration due to circumstances which are not attributable to any of the clubs concerned the match shall be played on another date.

(iv) In the case of abandoned or discontinued matches, any such match shall not count for the purpose of gaining any advantage from such a match, such as goals scored or points gained, unless the competent bodies of the Association declare such match valid and the result of the match at the time of abandonment or discontinuation is to stand. Furthermore, in the case of played matches subsequently declared null and void by the competent authorities of the Association, any such match shall not count for the purpose of gaining any advantage from such match, such as goals scored or points gained provided that such match had been played during the same season during which such a decision was taken.

16. BELATED OR NON-COMMENCEMENT OF A MATCH

(i) In the case that a team, without sufficient reason to the satisfaction of the Control and Disciplinary Board of the Association fails to turn up on the field of play at the appointed time of the match, but the match is nevertheless played, or fails, after the half-time interval, to turn up on the field of play on time as stipulated in the Laws of the Game and/or in the particular rules of the competition concerned, but the match is nevertheless continued, or without sufficient reason to the satisfaction of the Control and

Disciplinary Board of the Association, in any other manner such team, either causes the delay of the start of the match at the appointed time of the match or causes the delay of the second half of the match on time as stipulated in the Laws of the Game and/or in the particular rules of the competition concerned, its Club shall be liable to a fine as follows:

(a) In the case of the first team of a:

Premier Division Club – a minimum of fifty euro (€50) and a maximum of two hundred euro (€200);

First Division Club – a minimum of fifty euro (€50) and a maximum of one hundred and fifty euro (€150);

Second Division Club – a minimum of fifty euro (€50) and a maximum of one hundred euro (€100);

Third or inferior Division Club – a minimum of fifty euro (€50) and a maximum of seventy-five euro (€75).

(ii) (a) If on the lapse of ten (10) minutes from the official scheduled kick-off time of the match or, if on the lapse of ten (10) minutes of the expiry of the half-time interval of fifteen (15) minutes, one or both teams fail to turn up on the field of play ready to start or continue the match, as the case may be, or in the case that although both teams are on the field of play but in the opinion of the referee the match cannot start or re-start after the half-time interval due to a cause attributable to one or to both teams, the referee shall abandon the match and shall forward a detailed written report forthwith to the General Secretary of the Association.

(b) The referee is the sole arbiter to decide as to whether the ten (10) minutes from the official appointed time have elapsed. His decision shall be final.

(c) If both teams are present on the field of play and, although one or both teams is/are of the opinion that the match should not be played, the referee still decides that the match shall be played, both teams shall be obliged to play. However, if one or both teams deems that the match should not have commenced, it/they shall have the right to inform the referee and the opposing team in writing that it/they was/were playing the match under protest, stating the reason or reasons. The referee shall forward such protest together with the Official Match Report.

(d) If a team plays a match under protest and such team loses the match or the match ends in a draw, the Protests Board of the Association may award a win to such team or it may order a replay if in its opinion the match should not have been played. If the Protests Board decides to award a win to the protesting team the provisions of Rule (i) (a) above shall apply to the other team. Any decision of the Protests Board shall be final and binding.

17. OFFICIAL MATCH REPORT FORM

(i) (a) At least forty-five (45) minutes prior to the commencement of a competitive match, the Team Captains or the Officials in charge of the teams, shall be provided with the official Report Form of the match by the Referee. The Referee shall give the official Report Form first to the Team first mentioned in the fixture-list and afterwards to the other Team.

(b) Besides the name and surname and the number of the players and of the other authorised persons entitled to sit on the Reserves' Bench, all the other information required in the official Report Form must be correctly written on the Report Form. Furthermore, the Report Form shall be signed by those indicated in the Report Form.

(c) The official Report Form shall be filled in a way as to indicate clearly who are the players starting the match and who are the reserved players.

(d) The numbers on the official Report Form must correspond with the number shown on the jerseys worn by the players.

(e) The Captain or the responsible Official of the team to which the Official Match Report Form was last given, must hand back the Official Match Report Form to the referee of the match or to any of his assistants. This must be done at least twenty (20) minutes prior to the commencement of the match.

(ii) (a) After the Official Match Report Form has been given to the referee, no further changes may be made to the lists of players or to the lists of the other persons authorized to sit on the Reserves' Benches.

However, if anything in the Form needs to be corrected, including the replacement of any player, this may only be done until the kick-off. Such a correction or change must be in writing and made in triplicate. These three copies must be signed by the Captain of the Team making the change or

correction and shall give them to the referee of the match. The referee shall sign all the three copies, shall keep the original to attach to the Official Match Report Form and shall give a copy to each of the Teams' Captains.

(b) Notwithstanding the provisions of sub-clause (a) above, a player who prior to the start of the match has been indicated as one of the players on the Official Match Report Form and such a player is sent off by the referee prior to kick-off, such player may not be replaced either on the Official Match Report Form or in any in any other manner whatsoever. However, such a player may be substituted as long as he is replaced by one of the named substitutes on the Official Match Report Form.

(c) The referee has the authority to send off a player prior to kick-off as from the moment that he enters the field of play to start the match. This authority shall continue until the end of the match, including the half-time interval of the match, extra time and kicks from the penalty mark.

Furthermore, as from the moment that the referee arrives in the precincts of the stadium until he leaves the precincts of the stadium, he has the duty to report to the Association any kind of incident which may come to his knowledge.

(iii) (a) Players, including substitute players, whose name does not appear on the Official Report Form or about whom written information has not been given to the Referee shall be ineligible to play.

(b) A maximum of seven (7) substitute players may be included in the list mentioned in para. (i) (a) above.

(c) Clubs which, during a match, make use of players whose name does not appear on the list mentioned in para. (i) (a) above, even in the case that such Club has forfeited the points of a won or a drawn match due to the fact that such a player or players have been declared ineligible, shall be fined one hundred and twenty-five euro (€125) for each such player.

(d) Clubs which, during a match, make use of players whose number does not correspond with the number indicated on the list shall be fined seventy-five euro (€75) for each such player.

(e) Clubs which contravene the provisions of para. (iii) (c) or (d) above shall be fined seventy-five euro (€75) for each player.

(iv) (a) Before, during or after a competitive match a Club shall not allow any person to enter those areas of the stadium which are reserved for players unless such person is the Club's President or the Club's Representative on the Council of the Association or unless such a person's particulars are fully and correctly indicated in the Official Match Report Form of that competitive match.

(b) During a competitive match a Club shall not allow any person to sit or stay in the vicinity of the Reserves' Bench unless such person's particulars are fully and correctly indicated in the Official Match Report Form of that competitive match.

(c) A Club shall not include in the Official Match Report Form of a competitive match any person who is serving a suspension inflicted by the Association or whose qualification to sit on the Reserves' Benches is not in accordance with the Rules of the Association.

(d) A Club which is found guilty of having committed an offence under paras (iv) (a) or (b) or (c) above shall be fined for every such person:

Two hundred and fifty euro (€250) in the case of a competitive match of the first team of the Club; and Seventy-five euro (€75) in the case of a competitive match of any other team of the Club.

(v) (a) In so far as authorised persons, except players, entitled to enter those areas of the stadium or ground which are reserved for players, and to sit on the Reserves' Benches are concerned, these shall be from amongst those whose name the Club would have sent to the General Secretary of the Association and who would have been approved to enter those areas of the stadium or ground which are reserved for players and to sit on the Reserves' Benches. However, a person who is registered as a player with the Association shall not be authorised to enter such areas and/or to sit on the Reserves' Benches except in his capacity as a player of the Club which is taking part in a competitive match or unless he is authorised by the Association to act as a coach of the team of the Club which is taking part in a competitive match.

(b) The Executive Committee shall establish the maximum number and the qualification which authorised persons must have to be entitled sit on the Reserves' Benches.

(c) A Person who is approved to sit on the Reserves' Benches and who is either suspended by any authority within the Association from exercising this function or who is condemned by a judicial authority from entering any futsal/football stadium, must return to the General Secretary of the Association any document which so authorises him. Any such documents must be returned within two (2) days of the decision even in the case that such person intends to appeal or has actually entered an appeal from any such decision. Failure to return such documents within the mentioned time limit shall be considered as an offence.

(vi) (a) Unless the Bureau decides otherwise, the Club Secretary must furthermore provide the Captain of the Team with a players' list in triplicate. The information in these lists must correspond with the information given in the official Report Form. These lists shall be handed to the Referee together with the official Report Form duly filled in and signed.

(b) The Referee shall immediately hand one copy of the list to the Captain of the opposing team. After the match, the Referee shall send a copy of each list to the General Secretary of the Association, together with the official Report Form of the match. The Referee shall keep the remaining copy for his perusal or to give to the press if and when required.

(vii) Knowingly giving false information in an official Report Form of a match or in the other lists to be handed to the referee is considered as a very serious offence and the Club and any person who is found guilty of this offence shall be dealt with by the Control and Disciplinary Board of the Association in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Association.

18. CHECKING OF IDENTITY

(i) (a) Players mentioned in the official Report Form are obliged to have with them the Government's Identity Card or a valid passport. Other authorised persons are obliged to have with them the Government's Identity Card.

(b) The Captain of a Team shall have the right to ask the Referee to check the identity of the players of the opposing team. In such a case the referee shall be assisted by his assistant referee.

(c) The referee shall have the right to check the identity of any or all players mentioned in the official Report Form.

(d) Identification of players may be made through:

(i) the Government Identity Card; or

(ii) a valid Passport;

(ii) (a) The Referee must check the identity and the qualification of all authorised persons who have been indicated on the Official Match Report Form. For this purpose the Referee may be assisted by the Assistant Referee and Timekeeper. Such identification shall be made through the Government's Identity Card or a valid passport.

(iii) If the Referee cannot ascertain the identity of any such person he shall exclude such person from sitting on the Reserves' Bench.

(iv) If it results that a person who was allowed to be on the Reserves' Bench was not authorised to do so, such person shall be suspended from all futsal activities for a period of three (3) months and his Club shall be fined the sum of one hundred and twenty-five euro (€125) for every such unauthorized

person. However, if such person was serving a suspension which excludes him from sitting on the Reserves' Bench, he shall be suspended from all futsal activities for a period of one (1) year. If, when such suspension is inflicted, such person is still serving his original suspension, the new suspension will start to run on the day following that on which his original suspension expires.

(v) In the case where a player's identity could not be ascertained because he does not produce his Government Identity Card or a valid passport, such player and his Club shall be fined seventy-five euro (€75) each.

(vi) In the circumstances mentioned above, in the case of a protest, complaint, charge or investigation, the burden of proof as to the identity of a player taking part in a match shall rest with the player and his Club.

19. DRESS OF PLAYERS AND OTHER AUTHORISED PERSONS ON THE RESERVES' BENCHES

(i) No reserve players shall be admitted to sit on the Reserves' Benches unless they are wearing a futsal kit (jersey and shorts (or tracksuit) and socks and coloured bib).

(ii) The Referee shall exclude from the Reserves' Benches any of the other authorised persons if in his opinion they are not decently attired.

(iii) If the circumstances so dictate, the referee may order both the players and the other authorised persons to wear attire which is different in colour from the colour of the jerseys used by the players of both teams.

20. POWERS AND DUTIES OF THE REFEREE IN CONNECTION WITH PLAYERS AND OTHER PERSONS AUTHORISED TO SIT ON THE RESERVES' BENCHES

(i) The Referee shall not allow a player to take part in a match both in the case that such a player is not included in the Official Match Report Form, except in the case that written notice about such a player has been given to the Referee as well as in the case that a such player has been sent off by the Referee either prior to kick-off or during the match, including during the half-time.

(ii) The Referee is entitled not to start a match or to abandon the match if the match has started if more than seven (7) players from each team and more than the number fixed by the Council of other authorized persons are sitting on the Reserves' Bench.

(iii) The Referee is entitled not to start a match or to abandon the match if the match has started if he becomes aware that any player on the field of play or any other player or person sitting on the Reserves'

Benches, is not included in the Official Match Report Form provided that he informs Captain of the Team concerned about this infringement and this notwithstanding such infringement persists. In case of doubt, the Referee shall check the identity of such persons by asking for the official Government Identity Card. In this duty, the Referee may ask the assistance of his assistant referee.

21. FAIR-PLAY CEREMONY PRIOR TO THE START OF COMPETITIVE MATCHES

(i) Prior to the start of each competitive match organised by the Association a Fair Play Ceremony will be held.

(ii) The Fair Play Ceremony will be held in accordance with those directives that the Executive Committee may give from time to time. The Executive Committee may give different directives for different categories of matches.

(iii) A person, who fails to take part in the Fair Play Ceremony as stipulated in the directives, shall together with his Club be guilty of the offence of bringing the Game into disrepute.

22. PROTESTS AND COMPLAINTS IN CONNECTION WITH COMPETITIVE MATCHES

(i) Protests and complaints in connection with competitive matches are to be made in accordance with the relevant provisions contained in the FMA Statute Annexes.

23. RECORDING OF A TWO NIL (2 - 0) RESULT

(i) When the Council or any other a competent Board or Committee of the Association, for any reason whatsoever, awards the points of a match to any team, a result of two (2) goals to nil (2 - 0) shall be recorded unless a better result has been obtained on the field of play by the team to which the match has been awarded.

24. DISCONTINUED PARTICIPATION BY CLUBS

(i) When a Club has, for any reason whatsoever, discontinued its participation in a competition, then:

(a) if the competition is run on a league basis, the points gained or lost are to be expunged from the league table if the discontinuing Club has not played at least one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) of its matches. If the discontinuing Club has played one-half ($\frac{1}{2}$) or more of its matches, then the points gained or lost are to stand and the points of the remaining matches shall be given to its opponents; and

(b) if the competition is run on a knock-out basis, its opposing Club in the draw shall pass on to the next round of the competition.

(ii) In any case, except in the case of a Club which has been removed or suspended by the Association, the Control and Disciplinary Board of the Association shall deal with the discontinuing club in accordance with the rules and regulations of the Association.

25. REMOVED AND DISBANDED CLUBS

(i) Clubs removed from a competition for misconduct or for any other cause, and Clubs which have been disbanded, shall not be allowed to re-enter a competition during the same season.

4. LAWS OF THE GAME FOR FUTSAL

26. LAWS OF THE GAME

(i) All competitive matches shall be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game and the decisions of the International Futsal Board.

(ii) When the Laws of the Game and/or the decisions of the International Futsal Board give discretion to a National Football Association to depart from such Laws or decisions, then these Competition Rules and, when these rules so permit, the particular rules of a competition, shall apply.

27. DECISIONS OF THE REFEREE

(i) Decisions of the Referee of a match on points of fact connected with the match shall be final and conclusive.

(ii) A referee is not entitled to impede a player from taking part in a competitive match because, in his opinion, such player is ineligible to play either because he is not duly registered or because he is under a suspension to play.

(iii) On any question of interpretation of the Competition Rules or of the Laws of the Game by the referee of a match, a protest may be lodged in accordance with the relevant provisions contained in the FMA Statute Annexes.

Matters concerning the Laws of the Game shall be deemed to be matters of a technical nature.

28. CLUBS RESPONSIBLE TO PROVIDE ADEQUATE BALLS

(i) (a) Each Club must provide the Referee with at least one ball which must be in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

(b) The Executive Committee may determine that besides in Premier Division League matches the ball of the match is provided by the Association. Such decision shall be subject to the payment of the relative expenses by the Clubs concerned.

(ii) Any Club which fails to provide adequate balls to the Referee shall incur a minimum fine of fifty euro (€50).

In his report the referee must state clearly the reason/s why he considered the ball/s to be inadequate.

(iii) If both Clubs in a competitive match fail to provide the Referee with adequate balls, the Referee shall not start the match and if the match has started but could not continue due to the lack of an adequate ball he shall abandon the match. In such a case, both Clubs shall be held responsible for the match not having been played or for the abandonment, as the case may be, shall be declared to have lost the match.

29. CLUBS' COLOURS AND PLAYERS' EQUIPMENT

(i) (a) Club Colours to be used in Futsal Competitions shall be the same as for Member Club colours as registered with the Malta Football Association

(b) The Association shall inform the Clubs concerned of the other Clubs' first and second set of colours of the equipment mentioned in sub-clause (a) above.

(ii) When the colours of the two teams are alike or similar, the team of the Club which is mentioned second in the fixtures' list (away team), shall change colours so as not to clash with any colours as those normally worn by the opponents.

(iii) When the colours of any team are predominantly black or dark blue and clash with the black colours to be used by the Match Officials, such team must change its colours.

(iv) (a) The colour or colours of the jersey worn by the goalkeepers must be distinguishable from the colour or colours of the jerseys worn by the players of both teams.

(b) If the colour/s of the players' jerseys of any team or those of the goalkeeper's jersey clash with the colour of the jersey intended to be used by the referee and/or his assistants, the referee and/or his assistants must wear a jersey which is predominantly black or dark blue in colour.

(vi) The basic compulsory equipment of a player shall consist of a jersey or shirt, shorts, stockings, shinguards and footwear. The jersey or shirt must have long or short sleeves.

(vii) (a) Players shall not be allowed to take part in a match if they have earrings or ear-studs or if in the opinion of the referee they have on their person any other object (including objects worn for medical reasons) which may constitute a danger to themselves or to other players. Long finger-nails may be considered as constituting a danger to the player himself and/or the other players.

(b) Since matches will be played indoor, players shall not be allowed to take part if they are wearing footwear which does not consist of shoes which are adequate to the type of futsal court in use. The Executive Committee may issue mandatory directives in this regard.

(viii) If the Referee, after having acted in accordance with the provisions of the Laws of the Game, deems that due to the failure on the part of any on team or of both teams to comply with any of the provisions above, the match cannot take place or the match is abandoned, the defaulting Club/s shall be held responsible for the match not having been played or for having been abandoned. The defaulting Club shall be declared to have lost the match and the other Club shall be considered to have won the match if it has no fault for the match not having been played or for having been abandoned.

(ix) If a Club or player does not comply with the provisions above but the match is nevertheless played, the defaulting Club and any player in default, shall incur a maximum fine of seventy-five euro (€75) each for each infringement.

30. CAUTIONS AND EXPULSIONS DURING A COMPETITIVE MATCH

(i) When during a competitive match the Referee decides to give an official caution to a player, he must do so by showing such player the "Yellow Card".

(ii) When in a competitive match the Referee decides to send a player off the field of play, he must do so by showing such player the “Red Card”.

(iii) When in a competitive match the Referee decides to send a player off the field of play for a second cautionable offence, he must first show him the “Yellow Card” and immediately afterwards show him the “Red Card”.

(iv) When the Referee of a competitive match decides to give an official caution to a club Official whose name is written on the Official Match Report Form or decides to send off such an official from the precincts of the field of play, he must do so by showing such player the “Red Card” to such official.

(v) (a) When a player or an official has been sent off the field of play by the Referee, such player or official must, without undue delay, go outside the precincts of the field of play, and may not return to the precincts of the field of play.

(b) If a player or an official fails to abide by the provision of sub-clause (a) above, he shall be guilty of an offence.

(c) If a player or an official who has been sent off the field of play for having committed an offence, and whilst going towards the outside of the precincts of the field of play or if he has remained within the precincts of the field of play or returns to the precincts of the field of play he commits another offence either on the field of play or within the precincts of the field of play, the penalty for such other offences shall be doubled.

(vi) When the Referee sends off a player from the field of play or sends off a reserve player or a Club Official from the precincts of the field of play, the Referee shall be entitled not to re-start the match until such a player or official actually leaves the precincts of the field of play. If the Referee deems that such a player or official is refusing to leave the field of play or the precincts of the field of play without undue delay, he shall have the right to abandon the match after duly warning the Team Captain of such a player or official that he would abandon the match if such a player or official does not leave forthwith the field of play and/or the precincts of the field of play.

31. TAKING OF KICKS FROM THE PENALTY MARK

Besides the playing of extra-time after the end of normal playing time to determine the winner of a match in the case that the rules governing the competition concerned provides for extra-time to be played, taking of kicks from the penalty mark is the only other obligatory method to determine the winning team in a match in the case that such match which is required to determine a winning team ends in a draw after normal playing time or extra-time, as the case may be.

Procedure of Taking of Kicks from the Penalty Mark:

(i) The referee decides which goal will be used for the kicks from the penalty mark. In so doing the referee may choose which goal without tossing a coin and his decision in this regard shall be final. However, if after taking into account all the issues connected with the kicks, such as safety and security, the state of the field of play, the state of the lighting and any other issue which the referee may consider fit to take into account he comes to the conclusion that both goals can be used for the kicks, he tosses the coin in the presence of the two captains to determine which goal will be used.

(ii) The referee tosses a coin and the team whose captain wins the toss has the choice to take the first or second kick.

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- (iii) The referee keeps a record of the kicks being taken.
- (iv) Subject to the conditions explained below both teams take five kicks.
- (v) The kicks are taken alternately by the teams.
- (vi) If, before both teams have taken five kicks, one has scored more goals than the other could score, even if it were to complete its five kicks, no more kicks are taken.
- (vii) If, after both teams have taken five kicks, both have scored the same number of goals, or have not scored any goals, kicks continue to be taken in the same order until one team has scored a goal more than the other from the same number of kicks.
- (viii) 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 his team has not used the maximum number of substitutes permitted under the competition rules.
- (ix) 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 allowed to take kicks from the penalty mark.
- (x) When a team finishes the match with a greater number of players than their opponents, they shall reduce their numbers to equate with that of their opponents and inform the referee of the name and number of each player excluded. The team captain has this responsibility.
- (xi) Before the start of kicks from the penalty mark the referee shall ensure that only an equal number of players from each team remain within the centre circle and they shall take the kicks.
- (xii) Each kick is taken by a different player and all the eligible players must take a kick before any player can take a second kick.
- (xiii) An eligible player may change places with the goalkeeper at any time when kicks from the penalty mark are being taken.
- (xiv) Only the eligible players and match officials are permitted to remain on the field of play when kicks from the penalty mark are being taken.
- (xv) All players, except the player taking the kick and the two goalkeepers, must remain within the centre circle.
- (xvi) The goalkeeper who is the team-mate of the kicker must remain on the field of play outside the penalty area in which the kicks are being taken, on the goal line where it meets the penalty area boundary line.
- (xvii) Unless otherwise stated, the relevant Laws of the Game apply when kicks from the penalty mark are being taken.
- (xviii) In order to guarantee the strict observation of these rules, the Referee shall be assisted by one assistant referee who shall note down the number of the players of each team having taken a kick. The other assistant referees shall supervise the players in the centre circle.

(xix) In the event of light failing before the end of taking of kicks from the penalty mark and in the opinion of the Referee light has failed definitely, the result shall be decided by the toss of a coin or the drawing of lots, at the discretion of the Referee. The toss of a coin or the drawing of lots, as the case may be, shall take place within the stadium where the match was played and at a time as early as practicable after the decision of the Referee as the Referee shall decide.

32. POINTS IN COMPETITIVE MATCHES PLAYED ON A LEAGUE BASIS

(i) In competitive matches played on a league basis, three (3) points shall be gained for a win, one (1) point shall be gained for a draw and no points shall be gained for a loss.

33. DECIDING MATCHES

(i) If at the end or during the part of the Competition which is played on a league basis the Rules governing that particular Competition do not specify what should happen in the case that two (2) teams finish on equal points in a way that it cannot be determined which of them has entered into the play-offs or has won the League and/or the Championship and/or the Section or is the Runner-up of the League or Section and/or has won promotion or has obtained the third and/or fourth and/or subsequent position in case that it is needed to establish officially such position/s or is relegated or shall play in a Relegation Pool, a deciding match shall be played between them and the winner shall be determined as the highest placed team between them.

(ii) (a) If at the end or during the part of the Competition which is played on a league basis the Rules governing that particular Competition do not specify what should happen in the case that three (3) or more teams finish on equal points in a way that it cannot be determined which of them has entered the play-offs or won the League and/or the Championship and/or the Section or is the Runner-up of the League or the Section and/or has won promotion or has obtained the third and/or the fourth and or a subsequent position in case that it is needed to establish officially such position/s, a Placing-List shall be compiled between all the teams which had finished on equal points and this by following the under mentioned criteria in the following order:

(a) the highest number of points in the direct encounters;

(b) in case of equal number of points in the direct encounters, the best goal difference in the direct encounters;

(c) in case of equal number of points and same goal difference in the direct encounters, the highest number of goals scored in the direct encounters;

(d) in case of equal number of points, same goal difference and same number of goals scored in the direct encounters, the best goal difference in the League or Section;

(e) in case of equal number of points, same goal difference and same number of goals scored in the direct encounters and same goal difference in the league, the highest number of goals scored in the League or Section; and

(f) in case of equal number of points, same goal difference and same number of goals scored in the direct encounters, same goal difference and same number of goals scored in the League or Section, the drawing of lots.

(ii) After such above mentioned Placing-List has been worked out and unless otherwise specified in other parts of this rule:

(a) for the purpose of determining the highest placed team, the top two (2) teams of the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them and the winner shall be determined as the highest placed team;

(b) for the purpose of determining the lowest placed team/s to be relegated in the case of one (1) team to be relegated, the bottom two (2) teams in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them and the loser shall be relegated as the case may be; in the case of two (2) teams to be relegated, the bottom team in the Placing-List shall be relegated, as the case may be, and the two (2) teams immediately preceding such team in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them and the loser shall be relegated as the case may be; in the case of three (3) teams to be relegated, the bottom two (2) teams in the Placing-List shall be relegated, as the case may be, and the two teams immediately preceding such two (2) teams in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them and the loser shall be relegated as the case may be.

(iii) (a) If at the end of a Competition which is played on a league basis and the Rules governing that Competition do not specify what should happen in case that four (4) or more teams finish on equal points and it is needed to establish three (3) or four (4) places at the same time, a Placing-List shall be compiled between all the teams which finished on equal points and this by following the criteria mentioned in Clause (ii) sub-clause (a) above.

(b) After the Placing-List has been worked out, the first two (2) teams in such Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them to establish the highest placed team amongst them and the winner shall be determined as the first placed team whilst the next highest two (2) teams in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them to determine the third placed team amongst them and the winner shall be determined as the third placed team.

(c) If it is needed to establish more than four (4) places at the same time, the same procedure mentioned in sub-clauses (i) and (ii) above shall be followed. In this case the number of deciding matches shall depend on the number of places which have to be determined at the same time.

(iv) For the sole purpose of determining the placing of teams in a pre-established Fixture-List in a competition which is played on a league basis, and the Rules governing that particular competition do not specify what should happen in the case that two (2) or more teams finish on equal points, no deciding matches shall be played and the placing of the teams for this purpose only, shall be decided by following the under mentioned criteria in the following order:

(a) the highest number of points in the direct encounters;

(b) in case of equal number of points in the direct encounters, the best goal difference in the direct encounters;

(c) in case of equal number of points and same goal difference in the direct encounters, the highest number of goals scored in the direct encounters;

(d) in case of equal number of points, same goal difference and same number of goals scored in the direct encounters, the best goal difference in the League or Section;

(e) in case of equal number of points, same goal difference and same number of goals scored in the direct encounters and same goal difference in the league, the highest number of goals scored in the League or Section; and

(f) in case of equal number of points, same goal difference and same number of goals scored in the direct encounters, same goal difference and same number of goals scored in the League or Section, the drawing of lots.

(v) (a) In case that a Competition is played on a league basis with different phases, if three (3) or more teams finish with equal number of points at the end of the Second and/or Final Phase of the Competition and their positions as stipulated in clauses II, III, and IV above need to be established, in the compilation of the Placing-List all the matches played so far by the teams concerned in the different phases of the Competition, including scheduled matches between the two (2) teams which were not played or were abandoned due to the fault of one (1) of the teams concerned, shall be taken into account.

(ii) In case that at the end of a Competition played on a league basis which involves the promotion of two (2) teams to a higher division and three (3) or more teams finish at the top with an equal number of points in the final Classification Table, the team placed first in the Placing-List shall be declared the winner and/or Champion of the League or Section and the teams placed as second and third in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them after which the winner shall be declared the runner-up of the League or Section and is therefore promoted.

(iii) In case that at the end of a Competition played on a league basis which involves the promotion of only one (1) team to a higher division and the two (2) next highest teams qualify to play in the Promotion Play-Offs:

(a) If three (3) teams finish at the top with an equal number of points in the final Classification Table, the teams placed in the first two places in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them and the winner shall be declared the Champion of the League or Section and is promoted to a higher division whilst the loser shall be declared the runner-up of the League or Section.

(b) If four (4) or more teams finish at the top with an equal number of points in the final Classification Table, the teams placed in the first two places in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them and the winner shall be declared the winner and/or Champion of the League or Section and is promoted to a higher division and the loser shall be declared the runner-up of the League or Section whilst the teams placed as third and fourth in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them after which the winner shall be declared the third placed team of the League or Section and the loser the fourth placed team of the League or Section.

(c) If three (3) or more teams finish in the second place with an equal number of points in the final Classification Table, the team placed first in the Placing-List shall be declared the runnerup of the League or Section and the teams placed as second and third in the Placing-List shall play a deciding match between them after which the winner shall be declared the third placed team of the League or Section and the loser the fourth placed team of the League or Section.

(vi) (a) Deciding matches mentioned in this Rule shall be played as soon as possible after the necessity arises and as may be decided by the Executive Committee.

(b) In such deciding matches, if at the end of normal time the result is still a draw, extra-time shall be played.

(c) If after the end of extra-time the result is still a draw, kicks from the penalty-mark shall be taken in accordance with the Laws of the Game.

34. REFEREE TO SEND THE OFFICIAL MATCH REPORT TO GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE ASSOCIATION

(i) (a) Immediately after a competitive match the Referee of such a match shall send to the General Secretary of the Association a full report of the match. Such report shall include all that needs to be reported in accordance with the Laws of the Game, any such other information, which is required by the Rules of the Association and such other information, which is required by the official Report Form provided by the Association.

(b) Such information must reach the General Secretary of the Association not later than twenty-four (24) hours after each match.

(ii) Failure by the Referee to comply with the provisions above shall be considered as a very serious offence.

(iii) The General Secretary of the Association shall, as early as practicable after having received the reports mentioned above of a competitive match, send to the participating Clubs at their mailing address which is registered with the Association, a report regarding any misconduct committed by any of its players and/or authorised persons who during the match were sitting on the Reserves' Benches.

35. GENERAL SECRETARY TO KEEP RECORD

(i) The General Secretary of the Association shall keep a record of all competitive matches played. This record shall include the name of the players taking part, the name of those players who were cautioned and/or expelled and the results of the matches, both at half-time and at full-time.

5. DISCIPLINARY SANCTIONS

36. GENERAL PROVISIONS

(i) The Regulations for the Control of Misconduct and all Kinds of Incidents during Competitive Futsal Matches, the Players' and Club Officials' Disciplinary Code, the Rules for the Investigation of Allegations of Bribery in Football under the Jurisdiction of the Malta Football Association and the Regulations On Bribery And Betting Regarding Football Matches shall also apply to competitive Futsal matches.

(ii) In the case of disciplinary sanctions to be imposed on players and/or on Clubs' Officials for offences committed in connection with Futsal competitive matches, notwithstanding the monetary sanctions mentioned in the Players' and Club Officials' Disciplinary Code, when the penalty which the Disciplinary Commissioner imposes in accordance with the said Disciplinary Code consists of a fine, the Disciplinary Commissioner shall, instead of imposing a fine, suspend the person concerned for one (1) match if the fine to be imposed is ten euro (€10) or less, two (2) matches if the fine to be imposed is more than ten euro (€10) but not more than twenty euro (€20) and three (3) matches if the fine to be imposed is more than twenty euro (€20).

(iii) Unless otherwise stated the rules governing Discipline and Control as set out by the Malta Football Association shall also apply to Futsal Member Clubs.

6. PRESENTATIONS AND PARTICIPATION IN THE UEFA FUTSAL CUP

37. PRESENTATIONS

(i) The winning team of each and every Division of the FMA Futsal National League as well as the winner of the Futsal Knock-Out Competition/s shall be presented by the Association with the winner's trophy whilst both Clubs contesting the final match of the Futsal Knock-Out Competition/s shall be presented with a commemorative plaque denoting that these Clubs/Teams had contested the final match of the Futsal Knock-Out Competition/s in that particular season.

(ii)(a) The players and the members of technical staff of the Champion Club/team of the respective divisions of the FMA Futsal National League shall be presented with a commemorative medal.

(b) In principle, the players and the members of the technical staff shall be presented with their medals in a medals award ceremony to be held immediately prior to the presentation of the trophy to the Champion Club/Team. In this case the medals will be presented to the players and the members of the technical staff included on the Referee's Official Line-Up of the match at the end of which the trophy and the miniature trophy are to be presented. However, a player and/or a member of the technical staff who was sent off by the referee before, during or after the match shall not be presented with a medal during the medals award ceremony. The remainder of the medals shall be handed over to the Club/Team to give to other deserving players and/or members of the technical staff. In case that the medals are not presented at the end of a match, all the medals will be given to the Club/Team to give to deserving players and members of the technical staff.

(iv) At the end of the season, the General Secretary of the Association will request each Member Club to nominate Futsal Players for the award of 'FMA Futsal Player of the Year' for each respective division. Nominations are to be sent strictly to the General Secretary by the deadline stipulated. Every Club Council Member will have the right to vote for first, second and third preference of his choice of player for his respective division. The Winners, Runners-Up and Second-Runners Up will be announced during a presentation ceremony during which the winners, runners-up and second runners-up for the 'FMA Top Scorer Award' for each respective division will also be presented.

38. PARTICIPATION IN UEFA FUTSAL CUP

(i) The winner of the Premier Division of the FMA Futsal National League shall have the right to participate in the UEFA Futsal Cup during the following season. If this team is prohibited and/or unable and/or refuses to participate, the runner-up of the top Division of the Futsal National League will be invited by the Association to participate in the UEFA Futsal Cup. However, the participation of the runner-up in the UEFA Futsal Cup will be subject to UEFA's approval. The participation of a Club or Team in the UEFA Futsal Cup shall also be subject to the rules, regulations, bye-laws and decisions of UEFA.

7. OTHER RULES, REGULATIONS AND BYE-LAWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

39. OTHER RULES, REGULATIONS AND BYE-LAWS OF THE ASSOCIATION

(i) Except in so far as otherwise stated in these regulations, the provisions of all the other Rules, Regulations, Bye-Laws and decisions of the Association, even if not expressly mentioned in these regulations, shall also apply to FMA Member Clubs and to players and officials participating in Futsal competitions in so far as these may be applicable.

(ii) In the event that these Rules, Regulations and Bye-Laws do not cover any particular issue, the Rules and Regulations of the Malta Football Association shall be deemed to apply.