

Greater Manchester Walking Football League Rules (Walking Football United Rules)

- **6-A-SIDE** - Maximum squad of 10.

- **4 FLEXI SUBS** - Any player - multi-use. Wait for a break in play on the referee's whistle or when the ball is in possession of the goalkeeper. Make the referee aware of intent when the ball is dead or safe in the goalkeeper's possession.

- **BALL SIZE** - Size 5 regular.

- **NO RUNNING, JOGGING** - On or off the ball - by any player - including the goalkeeper. If the goalkeeper jogs, runs into position in the penalty area, runs to save a corner, and no clear goal scoring opportunity has been denied, a free kick 3 metres outside of the penalty or closest to the point where the infringement occurred is awarded to the opposition.
If the goalkeeper runs across to make a save on a goal-bound effort or denies a clear goal scoring opportunity by their action, a penalty is awarded to the opposition - this will include running across to make a blocking save anywhere in the penalty area.

- **RUNNING INFLUENCING PLAY** - Any player running into a position linking up with play, receiving a pass, affecting play directly or pulling away defensive players by a run, intercepting the ball, moving to the ball, running onto the ball in the process of shooting, shall for a 1st offence: free kick against. 2nd offence: free kick against and a warning. 3rd offence: 2-minute Sin Bin.
Should a Sin Bin returning player further infringe the walking rule, a free kick is awarded against that person and the totting up process again continues.

- **RUNNING OFF THE BALL NOT INFLUENCING PLAY** - Any player running off the ball but not gaining individual or team advantage, and not directly affecting play shall have a warning against them BUT play will continue. Should the player in question infringe further, that player will have a final warning administered. A 3rd occurrence by the same player will result in a 2-minute Sin Bin, allowing play to continue and the sanction administered when there is a break in play or the goalkeeper has possession.
Should a free kick be awarded against any player caught running off the ball as a *general rule*, a distinct advantage would be attained if the outcome of any run was deemed a free kick - namely players could potentially run to negate a goal scoring opportunity in motion and only receive a free kick against.

- **MINIMAL CONTACT TACKLING ONLY** - No heel, ankle rapping from side or behind. Any heavy/aggressive, reckless or dangerous tackling will result in an automatic 2-minute Sin Bin. Any further incident during the match from the Sin Binned player on their return from the time sanction will result in a Red Card sending off. That player plays no further part in that match.
- **NO SHOULDER CHARGES PERMITTED** - If contact is minimal or accidental - a free kick will be given to the opponent of anyone considered to have shoulder charged/barged. A player guilty of shoulder charging/barging in an excessive, aggressive, reckless manner will be Sin Binned. A player shoulder charging or barging an opponent into a barrier or wall shall be Red Carded and play no further part in the match.
- **NO BUNDLING INTO BARRIERS** - A player guilty of bundling a player into a barrier will be Red Carded.
- **HEAVY TACKLES** - On the barrier result in a 2-minute Sin Bin time out.
- **CROWDING AT THE BARRIER** - (2 players tackling one player in very close proximity – Health & Safety:) results in a free kick to the single player. A player ‘Cornered’ (on a pitch with barriers) with no place to go or turn in the immediate presence of an attacking opponent will have a free kick awarded to them if that ‘cornered’ player is not allowed to turn out of the corner proper and safely before they are tackled.
- **PLAYERS 'CORNERED' OR BOXED IN ON PITCHES WITH BARRIERS MUST BE GIVEN TURNING SPACE & NOT TACKLED IN THE PROCESS** - (Health & Safety:) Anyone tackled from behind whilst confined in the corner, not given safe turning space of at least 1 metre, shall be awarded a free kick to be taken where the player should have been allowed to have turned safely.
- **PLAYERS MAY NOT PHYSICALLY STEP ACROSS AN OPPONENT TO BLOCK THEM FROM ATTEMPTING TO GET TO THE BALL, OR GAIN AN ADVANTAGE BY SUCH AN ACT** - Obstruction and a free kick to the opposition.
- **NO SLIDE TACKLES OR SLIDE BLOCKS** - A slide tackle occurrence is a Blue Card 2-minute Sin Bin. The slide block is deemed a lesser offence and carries a free kick against sanction.
- **PLAYERS GROUNDED (ON THE FLOOR) MAY NOT PLAY AT THE BALL WHILE NOT ON THEIR FEET** - Free kick to the opposition.

- **NO OFFSIDES**

- **CORNERS, KICK-INS PART OF PLAY** - if the pitch possesses touchlines/goal lines and no barriers or walls.

- **REBOUNDS OFF WALLS OR BARRIERS PERMITTED** - if indoors or outdoors and pitch does not have touchlines or goal lines. In the interests of safety - any player unnecessarily 'roughed up' on the barrier/wall shall have a free kick awarded to them. Any player crowded on the wall or barrier by two players from the opposition shall have a free kick awarded to them for 'Crowding'.

- **PLAYERS MAY NOT HOLD ONTO WALLS OR BARRIERS IN HOLDING OR SHIELDING THE BALL - BUT ONLY A HOLD TO CORRECT BALANCE OR AS A MEASURE TO STOP POTENTIAL ACCIDENT OR INCIDENT IS PERMISSABLE** - Free kick awarded against any player unnecessarily holding.

- **NO ENTRY INTO PENALTY AREA 'D' BY ANY OUTFIELD PLAYER** - The exception being by momentum & no advantage gained. Should a defender have inadvertently stepped into the area, but play, or the outcome of play has not been affected, play carries on.

If the defender has stepped into the penalty area in the process of blocking a shot, shielding the ball, shepherding the ball back to the goalkeeper, playing the ball from within the penalty area, a penalty kick shall be awarded against the defender.

If a defender steps into the penalty area to cut across the space, or denies a clear goal scoring opportunity a penalty shall also be awarded against that player. Should an attacking player step into the penalty area by momentum after a shot from outside the area which results in a goal, the goal shall stand, otherwise for any other occasion where the attacker has stepped into the penalty area, a free kick is awarded to the goalkeeper to be taken where the infringement occurred. The penalty area line also extends in a vertical plane. Should a ball be in the air and inside the penalty area and an outfield player plays the ball whilst it is in the air, the appropriate sanction shall apply - namely free kick to the goalkeeper if by an attacker, penalty if by a defender.

A player pushed into the penalty area will have a free kick awarded in their favour.

- **NO GOALKEEPER EGRESS FROM PENALTY AREA** - except by momentum, or if sliding forward whilst making a save and the ball and goalkeeper's upper body have not left the penalty area. The goalkeeper cannot slide forward in making a save and make contact with the ball outside of the penalty area.

If the goalkeeper egresses from the penalty area - a penalty is awarded to the opposition.

If a goalkeeper egresses from the penalty area to intercept a ball, halt a player's progress or deny a clear goal scoring opportunity, a penalty is awarded to the opposition and the goalkeeper is Sin Binned for 2 minutes.

Should the goalkeeper egress from the penalty area and makes a cynical/aggressive/reckless challenge to deny a goal scoring opportunity, a penalty is awarded against the team of the goalkeeper, that player will receive a Red Card and play no further part in that game.

- **A BALL ON THE LINE OF THE PENALTY AREA IS CONSIDERED FAIR GAME** - The penalty area plane rises up from the line.

- **THE WHOLE OF THE BALL HAS TO BE OVER ANY LINE TO BE CONSIDERED OUT OF PLAY OR INSIDE/OUTSIDE THE PENALTY AREA**

- **PENALTIES** - One step rule. A player takes one step back from the ball and elects to kick it from there or plants one foot beside the ball (one step) and kicks the ball with the other. If a player has taken two steps or more and scores, the goal is disallowed and the kick retaken. If the player has taken two steps or more and misses or has the shot saved, the kick is not to be retaken and play resumes.

- **ALL FREE KICKS ARE INDIRECT** - A goal can be awarded if the ball deflects off an opposing player or the goalkeeper touches the ball on its way into the goal before a second touch by a player from the same team.

- **IF THE REFEREE HAS STOPPED PLAY WITH A BLOW OF THE WHISTLE, PLAY CAN ONLY RESUME WITH A BLOW OF THE WHISTLE FROM THE REFEREE** - No quick free kicks without defences being in position and the referee blows the whistle to resume play.

- **TEAMS CANNOT SCORE DIRECTLY FROM THE KICK-OFF UNLESS THE BALL HAS BEEN PASSED TO A TEAM MATE**

- **3 METRE EXCLUSION ON PLAYERS ON ALL DEAD BALL SITUATIONS** - Should a player not have retreated 3 metres from a dead ball situation, the referee will pace out 3 metres and assert where the player shall place themselves. If that player still has not retreated the referee will warn the player that should they not move immediately, that player will be Sin Binned. The referee shall Sin Bin any player that has not heeded the directive.

- **OFFENSIVE FREE KICKS NEAR PENALTY AREA LINE** - Move ball back 3 metres to allow defence opportunity to position themselves between ball and goal. Play cannot resume until the defence has positioned themselves and the referee has resumed play by whistle (no quick play permitted).
- **BALL HEAD HEIGHT RESTRICTION** - The height shall be set at 6 feet. The referee has sole interpretation of the height limit. A ball exceeding the height restriction must have the ball completely over 6 feet *NB* - A ball rising to a player's head and headed downwards is not an infringement if the player's feet are in contact with the ground.
- **PLAYERS MAY HEAD THE BALL** - Diving headers are acceptable (but are inadvisable).
- **A BALL DEFLECTED OFF A PLAYER RISING ABOVE THE HEIGHT RESTRICTION RESULTS IN A FREE KICK TO THE OPPOSING TEAM**
- **IF IN THE PROCESS OF A SAVE BY THE GOALKEEPER THE BALL RISES ABOVE HEAD HEIGHT, THE BALL IS RETAINED BY THE GOALKEEPER, PLACED ONTO THE GROUND & KICKED FROM THE PENALTY AREA**
- **A BALL IS CONSIDERED DEAD IF IT HAS RISEN ABOVE HEAD HEIGHT IN ANY CIRCUMSTANCE**
- **ON OUTDOOR PITCHES WHERE THERE ARE GOAL LINES** - IF IN THE PROCESS OF THE GOALKEEPER MAKING A SAVE THE BALL IS DEFLECTED BEHIND THE GOAL LINE A CORNER IS GIVEN - ***EXCEPT*** IF THE BALL HAS RISEN ABOVE HEAD HEIGHT BEFORE CROSSING THE GOAL LINE - There cannot be a height restriction on the ball and the ball is still live before it leaves the confines of the pitch. This also applies to deflections off outfield players.
- **INDOOR SPORTS HALL WHERE THE GOAL IS SET FORWARD OF THE WALL ALONG A GOAL LINE** - REBOUNDS OFF BACK WALLS/BARRIERS PERMITTED.
- **GOALKEEPERS MAY RECEIVE BACK PASSES & CAN CHOOSE TO THROW THE BALL OUT UNDER-ARM OR ELECT TO KICK IT OUT INTO PLAY. THEY MAY ALSO PICK UP & DROP TO KICK**

- **GOALKEEPERS MAY ONLY THROW THE BALL USING AN UNDER-ARM THROW (Bowling action) - Throwing infringements or the ball above head height throws result in a free kick to the opponents 3 metres outside the area.**
- **GOALKEEPERS KICKING THE BALL OUT (Not through the result of making a save) & THE BALL RISES ABOVE HEAD HEIGHT - Indirect free kick to the opposition to be taken 3 metres outside the penalty area from the side that the ball was kicked from.**
- **NO RESTRICTION ON TIME THE GOALKEEPER HAS TO PLAY THE BALL OUT OF THE AREA - But the Referee may warn the keeper of time wasting. Should the warning not be heeded, a free kick may be awarded 3 metres centrally outside the penalty area.**
- **NO RESTRICTION ON PASS BACKS/PASS OUTS BY THE DEFENCE & GOALKEEPER - But the Referee may warn the team in possession of the ball that they need to progress play forward (time wasting, undesirable sportsmanship). Should the warning not be heeded, the Referee may award a free kick at the point where the warning was not heeded to the opposition for time wasting/poor sportsmanship. If the goalkeeper is penalised for time wasting, the ball is placed 3 metres outside the penalty area.**
- **GOALKEEPERS MUST WEAR A TOP THAT DISTINGUISHES THEM FROM OTHER PLAYERS**
- **GOALS CAN BE SCORED FROM ANY OUTFIELD POSITION**
- **GOALKEEPERS CANNOT SCORE A GOAL**
- **A BALL CROSSING A BARRIER WILL BE RETURNED TO THE TEAM NOT TOUCHING IT LAST BEFORE IT CROSSED THE BARRIER - To be placed 1 metres from the barrier.**
- **A 'SIN BIN' 2-MINUTE TIME OUT IS IN EFFECT FOR PERSISTENT OR MORE SERIOUS OFFENCES. THE REFEREE'S DECISION IS FINAL & SHOULD BE RESPECTED & CARRIED OUT WITHOUT DELAY**
- **A ZERO TOLERANCE OF DISSENT, ABUSE, ARGUMENTATIVE BEHAVIOUR, SWEARING, SARCASM TOWARDS THE REFEREE IS IN EFFECT - A player will be Sin Binned for such offences. Prolonged or extreme abuse to an official will result in a Red Card and that player plays no further part in that match.**

- ANY PLAYER SWEARING ABUSIVELY AT OPPONENT PLAYERS, TEAM MATES, OFFICIALS, TEAM STAFF OR SPECTATORS WILL RESULT IN A SIN BIN SANCTION - Any three same or three variety of infringements result in a blue card sin bin 2-minute time-out on the totting up procedure. A player returning from a Sin Bin time out will again proceed on the totting up procedure should any further infringements occur.

- A PLAYER SENT OFF ON A RED CARD FOR VIOLENT CONDUCT - (ie kicking out, throwing a punch or head-butting) will play no further part in the tournament on that particular day. Dependent on the circumstances and level of violence, the guilty player may also be disqualified from further participation in the tournament.

- A PLAYER SENT OFF TAKING NO FURTHER PART IN THAT MATCH. A TEAM MAY SUBSTITUTE THE SENT OFF PLAYER AFTER A PERIOD OF 5-MINUTES OR A GOAL HAS BEEN CONCEDED - **Whichever occurs first.**

A match featuring small sides would be grossly unfair if in the result of a Red Card, a team had to play 4 vs 5 for a prolonged duration.

Any team having a player Red Carded will be under scrutiny, and dependent on the severity of the offence, may place that team liable to be disqualified from further participation in the tournament.