



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

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Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

1. The Tournament should be known as *the Budget Energy SuperCupNI International Youth Football Tournament*.

2. The Tournament shall be organised by the Directors and Members of the Tournament Management Team and shall be known here on in as the TMT.

3.

a. All players participating must be in one of the following age groups:

Players born on or after 1 January 2010 – Premier Section (Boys and Girls)

Players born on or after 1 January 2012 – Junior Section (Boys and Girls)

Players born on or after 1 January 2013 – Minor Section (Boys)

b. Each competing team must be able to produce proof of date upon registering their team at the tournament. All registration must take place before 5pm on Sunday 26th July, unless exceptional circumstances prevent this. No players can be added to a panel of players at the tournament after the above deadline. Acceptable forms of proof of date of birth includes birth certificate, passport, Comet registration form or similar player registration form. All players must have photographic forms of ID. No player can compete in the tournament until the TMT are satisfied that they are eligible to compete. The Directors and TMT reserve the right to introduce whatever practical measures available to them in order to establish a player's true age.

c. Each team is required to play in numbered kit and each player MUST use the same number throughout the duration of the tournament.

d. Each team is required to ensure all players are wearing shin-guards during all matches.

e. Players and officials are not allowed to display messages promoting drugs, alcohol, tobacco products, VAPE products, betting or gambling on their playing kit, team kit or equipment (including kit bags, water bottles or medical bags) throughout the duration of the tournament.

f. Players can only play in one section of the tournament, so if a player is registered for a Minor team for Club A, he cannot then play in the Junior section for Club A.

4.

a. In the male section of the tournament, the Premier, Junior, and Minor sections of SuperCupNI are open tournaments, and eligible teams may be either Club teams affiliated to their national football association or teams representing more than one club (i.e...league or divisional select team). Northern Ireland teams in the Minor Section must be club teams only and play in a recognised league that is affiliated to the Irish FA.

b. Teams shall be invited to apply for entry through an application process, which is advertised and promoted on the tournament's website and social media channels. The TMT shall have the power to accept or reject any application for proposed entry into the tournament.



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

- c. Northern Ireland teams in the Premier and Junior Sections of the boys' tournament will be limited to six County select teams in each section.
- d. In the female section of the tournament, the Junior section is an open tournament, and eligible teams may either be club teams affiliated to their national football association or teams representing more than one club (i.e... league or divisional select team).
Teams from Northern Ireland are restricted to entry in the Junior section of the tournament. The Premier section representative from Northern Ireland shall be the national team representing the Irish Football Association.
- e. By entering the tournament, teams undertake to accept the arrangements, adhere to policies/procedures and any decisions made by the TMT and/or directors.

Rules 4F to 4P inclusive apply only to Northern Ireland County Select teams in the Premier and Junior Sections.

- f. In order to qualify for a county team, the player must satisfy one of the criteria referred to in each of the following paragraphs (**g onwards**)
- g. The player must play for a county in which his natural parents reside. The parent's address is to be confirmed by the production of an original utility bill or any other original document which in the opinion of the TMT satisfies this requirement of residence.
- h. In the event of a player whose parents reside at different addresses and live in different counties the player must nominate his county by selecting one of his parents as his qualification parent. That parent's address must be confirmed by production of an original utility bill or any other original document which in the opinion of the TMT satisfies and confirms this requirement of residence. Once a player has selected his qualification parent that player is not permitted to change his selection at any time in the future unless that qualification parent is deceased or has permanently moved out of residence of the original county in which he/she resided and the TMT is satisfied that any change of residence is not temporary and in particular is not specifically undertaken so that the player can change his nomination of county at any time in the future.
- i. In the event a player not residing with either mother or father the player will use the address of his legal guardian or the address of the adult with whom he is permanently residing and that address must be confirmed by the production of an original utility bill or any other document which in the opinion of the TMT satisfies and confirms this requirement of residence.
- j. The parent of the player or the qualification parent or the qualification adult must be resident in the county for which the player wants to play from the 1st day of May in the year in which the player wishes to play in the competition of the SuperCupNI.



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

- k. If the player is legally adopted or is being fostered, then the rules above shall apply in the same manner to the adults who are adopting or fostering the player concerned.
- l. Any matters of dispute relating to issues of residence within the county and any issues of dispute regarding county boundaries shall be resolved by the TMT which shall be entitled to use all available evidence including Ordnance Survey maps in reaching their decisions as to whether a player can play for a particular county. The decision of the TMT shall be made at their sole discretion and any decision reached shall be final and binding between all the parties concerned.

For the sake of clarification, post codes are not evidence of county boundaries and will not be used for this purpose.

- m. Players resident in Northern Ireland may only play for their respective County Select team in the Premier and Junior sections; the only exception being a player from Northern Ireland if;
 - 1. They have attained the age of 16 years at the date of the tournament, and
 - 2. They have given a full-time contractual commitment to that team, and
 - 3. They have obtained the necessary International Clearance Certificate.

Save in circumstances which the TMT, in their sole discretion, determine to be extenuating, once a player has represented his respective County team in either the Junior or Premier section of the Tournament he may only play for that same county in future tournaments (for the avoidance of doubt, if a player plays for a County team in the Junior section he can only then play for that same county in the Premier section).

- n. Any protest or objection regarding the eligibility of a player who has represented a County Select team in either the Junior section or Premier section of the Tournament must be made within 28 days of:
 - 1) The date of alleged infringement; or
 - 2) If the alleged infringement was recurrent, the date on which the most recent infringement was committed, in writing to the TMT and be accompanied by a deposit of **£250**.
- o. The TMT shall be responsible for investigating any allegation made pursuant to Rule 4G to 4N and any decision made by them following such investigations shall be final and binding between the parties and may not be appealed.
- p. In the event that the subject of any protest or objection made pursuant to any of rules between 4G to 4N is upheld by the TMT, the deposit paid by the complainant shall be refunded and the County Committee of the County team for which the ineligible player has played during the Tournament shall be responsible for all costs associated with the investigation carried out by the TMT in relation thereto. In circumstances where the protest or objection is not



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

upheld, the complainant shall forfeit the deposit paid by them and will also be responsible for all costs associated with the investigations of the TMT into the allegations made.

5. In the Minor section of the boys' tournament and the Junior section of the girls' tournament, all players must be signed by the club in their respective league they will be playing in 2025-2026 season by 17th July 2026.

Participating NI clubs may only use players signed by the club in the Minor section of boys and Junior section of girls. No club is permitted to play "guest players" and all teams will be asked to provide a printed list from the Comet registration platform showcasing that the player they are registering is in fact registered with their club for the upcoming 2025-2026 season. This list must be presented to the tournament office in advance of 5pm on Sunday 26th July 2026.

6. All teams taking part in this tournament must have received the permission of their own Association or League and National Association concerned. Teams must submit written proof that permission has been granted by their National Association. It is the aim of the TMT that all participating teams should have a Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy in place, and they should confirm their adherence to the tournament's child protection policy prior to the tournament.

7.

- a. The Tournament entry fee is as detailed in the Tournament Information and Entry Form.
- b. The cost of accommodation, meals and transport within Northern Ireland is to be paid in two instalments in March and June, in accordance with the Tournament entry form. No team may compete in the tournament without completing all financial instalments, unless prior agreement has been made with the TMT.

8. GROUP / QUALIFYING GAMES

Boys Minor, Junior and Premier section explainer - 16 Teams

There will be 4 groups, 4 teams in each group. Each team will play three group games – one on Monday, one on Tuesday and one on Wednesday. Three (3) points for a win and one (1) point for a draw in all group games. On the basis of points gained in the group games, teams will proceed to the semi-finals of the following competitions:

- SuperCupNI Cup - The four first placed teams in the groups.
- SuperCupNI Globe - The four second placed teams in the groups.
- SuperCupNI Vase - The four third placed teams in the groups.
- SuperCupNI Bowl - The four fourth placed team in the groups.



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

Girls' Premier section explainer: 8 teams

There will be two groups of 4 teams, Group A and Group B.

Three qualifying games will be played – one on Monday, one on Tuesday and one on Wednesday.

Three (3) points for a win and one (1) point for a draw.

Based on the league positions after these three games, the finals of the following will be played on Thursday 30th July.

- SuperCupNI Cup - Winner of Group A v Winner of Group B
- SuperCupNI Globe - Second in Group A v Second in Group B
- SuperCupNI Vase - Third team in Group A v Third team in Group B
- SuperCupNI Bowl - Fourth team in Group A v Fourth team in Group B

Girls' Junior section – There will be two groups of 4 teams, Group A and Group B.

Three qualifying games will be played – one on Monday, one on Tuesday and one on Wednesday.

Three (3) points for a win and one (1) point for a draw.

Based on the league positions after these three games, the finals of the following will be played on Thursday 30th July.

- SuperCupNI Cup - Winner of Group A v Winner of Group B
- SuperCupNI Globe - Second in Group A v Second in Group B
- SuperCupNI Vase - Third team in Group A v Third team in Group B
- SuperCupNI Bowl - Fourth team in Group A v Fourth team in Group B

In the event of when team placings in the girls' and boys' tournament cannot be determined solely by points, then the tournament management team will use the following (in order) to separate the teams -

1. Goal difference.
2. Goals for.

If this is unsuccessful, then 'best result' for each shall be adopted, using initially goal difference and if this fails then goals for.

If teams still cannot be separated, the tournament management team shall adopt a further points system with respect to these teams of 2 points for winning a half; 1 point for drawing a half, plus a further 2 points for an overall victory and 1 point for an overall draw.

In the event that teams still cannot be separated, the team position shall be drawn by lot in the tournament office at the Lodge Hotel.

9. SEMI-FINALS IN BOYS SECTIONS

The semi-finals of all SuperCupNI competitions will be played as follows:



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

(In semi-finals the winner Group A will play Group C and Group B will play Group D)

If any of the matches in the Knock-Out stages, place matches or finals in the Tournament ends in a draw, the winner will be determined by the taking of penalty kicks at the end of the game in accordance with the conditions approved by the International FA Board.

10. FINALS IN BOYS SECTIONS

The two winners of the semi-finals shall play in the final.

11. 3RD AND 4TH PLACE GAMES

The two losing Semi Final teams will play one another to determine 3rd and 4th.

12. MANAGEMENT OF GAMES

(a) Duration of Games:

1. All Premier and Junior section games in the boys' and girls' sections are 35 minutes per half (70 minutes total duration of games)
2. All Minor section games in the boys' section are 30 minutes per half (60 minutes total duration of games).
3.
 - a. A size 4 leather ball will be used in the Minor section games, but a size 5 ball in all other games. Please note the tournament does not provide balls for warm-up or training purposes and teams are asked to bring their own.
 - b. Each team can use a maximum of 7 substitutions. A player who is being substituted must leave the field of play by the nearest point on the touchline / goal line (unless the referee indicates the player can leave quickly or immediately at the halfway line or a different point because of safety or injury etc). In accordance with International Football Association Board. Laws of the Game, teams have three windows to make their seven substitutions. A player who has been substituted **cannot** take any further part in that game. Players who are nominated as substitutions are asked to warm up on the side nominated by the match day official and they must wear a bib/vest that does not clash with any of the colours of any of the teams playing.
 - c. All teams must be at the relevant pitch one hour before kick-off. Due to the nature of the tournament and venues hosting back-to-back games, teams are advised to not turn up to the venue any earlier than 90 minutes before kick-off. This will avoid congestion in changing areas and will ensure pitch coordinators and volunteers can prepare venues efficiently and without interruption.
 - d. A team list, on the Tournament match card, must be completed and handed to the referee 30 minutes before the commencement of every game.



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

- e. All Tournament matches will be played in accordance with the Laws of the Game as laid down by the International Football Association Board - <https://www.theifab.com/>
- f. Teams must register a panel of a minimum of 16 players and a maximum of 18 for the tournament and up to a maximum of 7 substitutes may be used.
- g. During the tournament, only team members who display accreditation will be allowed into the changing room areas or the technical area. Any one not displaying tournament accreditation will be asked to relocate to the spectators' area (behind the fence or in the grandstands/terraces).

13. Referees and Assistant Referees, who must be in membership of a recognised Referee Association, shall be appointed by the Referee Department, which has been appointed by the TMT. For the SuperCupNI 'cup section' of the tournament, fourth officials may be appointed by the Referee department.

14. Please note there is no 'home' team for any matches and as such no team has priority with regards to their selection of kit colours. If the team colours lead to confusion and are not deemed acceptable by the match day official, one team, determined by the toss of a coin shall change. The team named 'first' on fixture list ie...**County Fermanagh** v County Tyrone will be allowed to select their side of the coin first. The winner of the coin toss will take preference on the kit they wish to wear. All teams are asked where possible to speak to the opponents prior to their match (**at least 6 hours before kick off**) to ascertain kit colours for the match. This will ensure teams can organise kit in advance of their departure from their accommodation. All Northern Irish based teams (Minor club teams and County teams) will be asked to provide a contact number for a responsible person who can share their kit colour choices.

All non-Northern Irish teams will be allocated a 'tournament courier' who will be responsible for liaising with opponents to ensure where possible kit clashes can be avoided.

15. The Tournament will be held in the following Council areas in Northern Ireland, Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and Mid and East Antrim Borough Council areas.

16. Matches will be played on natural grass playing pitches and artificial playing surfaces, which have been approved by the Irish Football Association for competitive matches to take place. The use of football boots with metal studs is prohibited on artificial playing surfaces and the match day officials reserve the right to check all footwear prior to matches on artificial surfaces.



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

17. OFFENCES

Offences in Boys' section

- a) If a player is sent off the field of play by the Referee, they shall be automatically suspended from taking part in the team's next game.
- b) If the offence is a serious one, their case shall be considered by the Referee and Disciplinary department at the tournament, who shall be entitled to impose a more severe punishment.
- c) If the same player being sent off twice, shall automatically be suspended from the remainder of the tournament.
- d) Any player who is cautioned twice in the group qualifying games on Monday to Wednesday will be suspended from playing in Thursday's game, however any player cautioned on Monday and Tuesday (successive days) will miss Wednesday's game but free to play again on Thursday.
- e) Any player who holds one caution (yellow card) at the conclusion of the group of qualifying games on Wednesday, will have that caution expunged.
- f) The above criteria will also apply to coaching staff / and medical staff.

Offences in girls' section (please note teams only play four matches opposed to 5 in the boys)

- g) If a player is sent off the field of play by the Referee, they shall be automatically suspended from taking part in the team's next game.
- (h) If the offence is a serious one, their case shall be considered by the Referee and Disciplinary department at the tournament, who shall be entitled to impose a more severe punishment.
- (i) If the same player is sent off the field of play twice, they shall automatically be suspended from the remainder of the tournament.
- (j) If a player is sent off (red card) on Wednesday they will be automatically suspended for their next match on (Thursday) irrespective if it is a Final or not.
- (l) If a player receives a caution (yellow card) Monday and Tuesday (successive days) they will be suspended from the team's next game on Wednesday but free to play again on Thursday.
- (m) Any player who holds a single yellow card having been cautioned on Monday or Tuesday will have their cautions expunged.
- (n) The above criteria will also apply to coaching staff / and medical staff.

If in any of the sections of the tournament it is discovered that a suspended player has played in a fixture from which they were suspended in, the opposition will be awarded a 3-0 win.

Please note, referees shall report cautions and sending-off offences to the TMT, who shall inform the Irish Football Association, who will report to the respective National Association or Associations concerned. Referees will be tasked with ensuring they provide a detailed report on



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

sending off offences and incidents where they have reported that an element of the tournament code of ethics has been breached.

The Tournament Management Team reserve the right to be made aware of disciplinary cases by national associations prior to the tournament and to discuss each of the individual cases. The TMT disciplinary team, if necessary, will make national associations aware of any major disciplinary cases recorded at the tournament after the tournament has concluded.

18. PROTESTS

Any protest must be made NO LATER than two hours after each game concerned has been completed. Protests must be made in writing via letter or email to the TMT and be accompanied by a deposit of £20 UK sterling. Deposits will only be refunded if the protest is upheld by the TMT. The TMT's decision is final and cannot be appealed. If the conditions of this rule are not complied with, the protest will not be competent.

19. The winners in the various SuperCupNI competitions shall receive a trophy together with 23 medals. The runners-up in each competition shall receive 23 medals.

20. All teams must ensure they have adequate insurance cover in respect of participation at the tournament. The TMT reserve the right to ask for evidence of said insurance to be shown before and during the tournament.

21. Participating clubs and associations shall be responsible for:-

1. The behaviour of the members of its delegation (officials and players) and of any person carrying out duties on its behalf throughout the competition for the whole duration of their stay in Northern Ireland. They (coaches/officials/staff) will be responsible with ensuring that their party comply with the tournament code of ethics.
2. Providing compulsory health (public liability), accident and travel insurance cover for all the members of its delegation.
3. Paying for incidental expenses incurred by delegation members during the course of their stay in Northern Ireland and for any costs incurred by additional members of the delegation.
4. In respect of teams staying at Ulster University, Coleraine, a charge of £100 UK sterling will be made for a replacement of a lost key. All teams who report missing/lost keys to the accommodation team will be invoiced for the lost keys or damages following the tournament.
5. Ensuring that silence is respected in all accommodation between the hours of 11pm and 7am and to respect that other guests may well be staying in the accommodation.



The Budget Energy SuperCupNI

#morethanjustfootball



Tournament rules encompassing 1st January 2026 to 31st December 2026

6. Pay for costs incurred if they wish to extend their agreed length of stay, whether this is before or after the tournament.
7. Ensuring that the conduct of their supporters is one which promotes fair play and accepts success and failure, victory and defeat, equally.
8. Obtain Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA), for all members of their travelling party if they arriving into or travelling through the United Kingdom, including Northern Ireland. Please note ETAs are not required if you already have a VISA to enter the UK or you are a British or Irish citizen.

22. Any question of interpretation or any other matter not specifically covered by these rules will be determined by the TMT. These rules may be reviewed and altered by the TMT, if circumstances were to change after they have been approved.