



## GIBRALTAR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (the "GFA")

### SENIOR LEAGUE RULES 2019/2020

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**GIBRALTAR FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (the “GFA”)**  
**GIBRALTAR NATIONAL LEAGUE**  
**RULES**

**1. NATIONAL LEAGUE (the “League”)**

1.1 The League is made up of one single division consisting of the 12 teams listed in Schedule 1 hereto (together referred to as the “Teams”)

**2. CONTROL OF THE LEAGUES**

2.1 The organisation, control and management of the League shall be the responsibility of the GFA;

2.2 The Governance & Strategy Board of the GFA (as this term is defined in the GFA Statutes) shall have the power to add, alter and/or remove these rules;

2.3 The Teams must comply with and shall be bound by these Rules and any other Rules and Regulations of the GFA;

2.4 The Governance & Strategy Board has the power to take action and make decisions, orders, rulings and impose such penalties as it deems appropriate in relation to any matter not specifically mentioned in these Rules.

2.5 The Gibraltar Football Association has exclusive entitlement and authorisation to use, assign, sell or otherwise exploit all marketing and commercial rights associated with the League.

**3. LAWS OF THE GAME**

3.1 All Matches (as this term is defined below) in the League will be played in conformity with the Laws of the Game promulgated by the International Football Association Board (“IFAB”) as amended from time to time.

**4. LEAGUE COMPETITION FACTORS**

4.1 The League shall commence on the week of 12<sup>th</sup> August 2019;

4.2 The Teams shall participate in a League competition consisting of 3 rounds in total.

4.3 In the First Round, all registered teams shall play each other once.

4.4 After completion of the First Round, the League shall split into two groups, as follows:

4.4.1 The 6 best ranked Teams shall play the remaining two rounds in a separate group called the “Championship Group”;

4.4.2 The remaining Teams shall play the remaining two rounds in a separate group called the “Challenge Group”

4.4 A Fixture Schedule for the League shall be issued by no later than 10<sup>th</sup> August 2019;

4.5 The League shall finalise by no later than 31<sup>st</sup> May 2020.

## **5. PARTICIPATION IN LEAGUE**

5.1 A Club may only register a Team in the League if it has obtained a Licence (as this term is defined under the GFA Domestic Club Licensing Regulations).

5.2 A Club may only have one Team in the League at any given time.

5.3 A Club must register its players in accordance with Rule 6 below and must adhere to the Home Grown Player Rules more specifically defined in Schedules 3 & 4 hereinafter contained.

5.4 A Club may only acquire and transfer its players in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the GFA.

## **6. PLAYER MEMBER REGISTRATION**

6.1. A Player is only eligible to register and play in the League if he is over the age of 16 years. Players under the age of 18 must provide written parental/guardian consent in order to play.

6.2. During any point in any given season, the maximum number of players registered in a squad is 25.

6.3. During any point in any given season, the minimum number of players registered in a squad is 17.

6.4. If at any time during the season, a Club does not have the minimum number of players registered, the Club will be automatically removed from the competition.

6.5. Irrespective of whether a Team consists of 17 or 25 Player Members, a minimum of two players must be registered as goalkeepers.

6.6. A Team must have a minimum of 4 Home Grown Players registered at all times.

6.7. A Team may not have more than three non-EU nationals registered in its squad at any given time. For the purposes of this rule, the squad includes Intermediate league players.

6.8. The possible combinations that enable Teams to comply with these requirements are set out in Schedule 4.

6.9. A Club may use players registered with its youth teams in accordance with the GFA feeder player policy;

6.10. Home Grown Players registered in the Intermediate League as set out above will not form part of the squad quotas outlined in Schedules 4.

## **7. PLAYER REGISTRATION STATUS**

7.1 Players must be registered with the GFA in accordance with the GFA Statutes and the Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players ("RSTP Regulations").

## **8. TRANSFER & REGISTRATION WINDOW**

8.1 There will be two transfer windows in each League Season as follows :-

8.1.1 The first commences on 10<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and ends on 30<sup>th</sup> August 2019 (the "Summer Window")

8.1.2 The second transfer window commences on the 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2020 and ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2020 (the "Winter Window")

8.2 During each Transfer Window, Clubs are able to Register and Transfer players in accordance with the GFA Rules and the RSTP Regulations;

8.3 Transfers outside the Transfer Windows will not be allowed except as provided for in the RSTP Regulations.

8.4 Players may be registered with a maximum of three Clubs during one season. During this period, the Player is only eligible to play in GFA official matches for a maximum of two Clubs.

## **9 THE LEAGUE COMPETITION**

### **SCORING SYSTEM**

9.1 Teams shall play each other in their respective Divisions (the "League Match");

9.2 The winner of each League Match shall score three points. Each Team participating in a League Match which is drawn, shall score 1 point. No points are awarded to the Team that loses a Match;

9.3 In the event of a Team being expelled from the League during the active season, all points acquired and goals scored and conceded by other Teams against the expelled Team will be removed.

### **THE LEAGUE TABLE**

9.4 The results of the League Matches shall be recorded by the GFA as follows :

a. in the First Round, a table containing in respect of each Team the following information :

i. The number of League Matches played in that Season;

ii. The number of League Matches won, drawn and lost as a Home Team in that Season;

- iii. The number of League Matches won, drawn and lost as a Visiting Team in that Season;
- iv. The number of goals scored in League Matches by and by against that Team in that Season;
- v. The number of points scored by the Team in that Season

b. In Rounds Two & Three, two tables as follows:

- i. The Championship Group, containing the 8 best ranked Teams of the First Round, in the same position, and with the same statistics as per the First Round; and
- ii. The Challenge Group, containing the remaining Teams in the same position, and with the same statistics as per the First Round.

9.5 The position of Teams in the table shall be determined by the number of points scored in that Season, the Team having scored the highest number of points being at the top of the table, and the Team having scored the lowest number of points being at the bottom

9.6 If any two or more Teams have scored the same number of points their position in the table shall be determined on the respective head to head points between the Teams in question, that is to say, the total number of points accumulated by each Team in all League Matches played against each other. The higher or highest placed Team shall be the Team with the higher or highest number of points.

9.7 If any two or more Team have scored the same number of points and have the same head to head points, their position in the table shall be determined on the respective head to head goal difference between the Teams in question, that is to say, the difference between the total number of goals scored and conceded by each Team in all League Matches played against each other. The higher or highest placed Team shall be the Team with the higher or highest goal difference ;

9.8 If any two or more Teams are equal in 9.5, 9.6 and 9.7 above, Fair Play scales shall be applied as follows :

- a. Receiving a Yellow Card : -1 point
- b. Double Yellow Card/ejection : -2 points
- c. Direct Card : -3 points
- d. Suspension of a coach : -4 points

9.9 If any two or more Teams are still equal after all of the above, they shall compete for the highest spot in a round-robin mini-tournament (if more than 2 teams) or in a one off match, the rules of which shall be determined by the GFA.

#### **LEAGUE CHAMPIONSHIP**

9.10 The Team which is at the top of the Championship Group table at the end of the Season shall be the League Champions, and as such, shall receive a trophy which it

shall return to the GFA in good order and condition by no later than 3 weeks prior to the final League Match of the next Season.

- 9.11 The Team that finishes at the top of the Challenge Group table at the end of the Season shall be the Challenge Group winners, and as such, shall receive a trophy which it shall return to the GFA in good order and condition by no later than 3 weeks prior to the final League Match of the next season.
- 9.12 Any damage to the trophy will need to be paid by the Team responsible. Failure to do so will result in the GFA deducting the amount payable for the damage from any annual funds given to the Team by the GFA.
- 9.13 The League Champions shall further receive a maximum of 40 commemorative medals to be presented to the Team, its Manager and to such of its Player and officials as the Team thinks fit, provided that any Player who has entered the field of play in a minimum of 5 of its League matches that Season shall receive from the Team a commemorative medal.

#### **PROMOTION AND RELEGATION**

- 9.14 There shall be no strict Promotion or Relegation in the League. Instead, the teams shall split into the Championship and Challenge group as more particularly described in Article 4 above.

#### **INABILITY TO FIELD A TEAM ON MATCH DAY**

- 9.15 In the event that a Club is unable to field a team for any League Match, the following procedure must be followed :
- i. The Club must write to the GFA by email by no later than 72 hours prior to the respective League Match, explaining the reasons for not being able to field a team and requesting a postponement;
  - ii. The GFA will, in its sole discretion, decide whether or not to re-schedule the League Match in question and communicate the decision to the Club by email within 24 hours of receiving the Club request.
  - iii. The GFA will also communicate its decision to the GFLA and its Fixture Secretary by email within 24 hours of such decision being taken.
- 9.16 The GFA will only consider re-scheduling the League Match in question as per 9.15(ii) below under exceptional circumstances.
- 9.17 The GFA has the discretion to waive the 72 hour time limit set in 9.15(i) above in extraordinary circumstances.
- 9.18 In the event that the GFA decides the League Match should be re-scheduled, the Fixture Secretary will be instructed to provide a new date for the postponed Match and shall inform the GFA within 24 hours of the decision.

- 9.19 In the event that the GFA decides the League Match in question should continue, and the Team does not field a team, the 3 points will be awarded to the opponent Team in the League Match in question. Disciplinary sanctions may also be imposed in accordance with the GFA Disciplinary Rules.

## **10 ADVERTISING**

- 10.1 For the purposes of this Rule, the following words have the following definition and interpretation :-

- i. "Advertising" means any designation, message, logo, trademark, name or emblem of any nature;
- ii. "Clothing" means the Match clothing of a Player or Team and shall include, without limitation shirts, shorts, socks, undershorts, t-shirts (or any other item of clothing worn under the shirt), sweat-bands, headbands, caps, tracksuits, gloves, waterproofs, sweat tops, sock tie-ups. Also, any outer garments worn by substitutes and Team Officials in the Technical Area at any time.
- iii. "Football boots" means any footwear worn during the period of a Match by a Player

- 10.2 Save as hereinafter stated, Advertising on Clothing and Football boots is prohibited during the period of a Match. This applies to Players, including substitutes and Team Officials.

The appearance on, or incorporation in, any item of clothing (including Football boots) of any distasteful, threatening, abusive, indecent, insulting, discriminatory or otherwise ethically or morally offensive message, or any political message is prohibited. The advertising of tobacco products is prohibited. A Player removing his shirt to reveal slogans, advertising or personal statements will be sanctioned by the GFA.

- 10.3 **Club Emblem and Name:**

- i. On Football boots – the officially designated Club emblem, name, initials, nickname or trademark registered by the Club, or a combination of such, may appear without restriction;
- ii. On all other Clothing – The officially designated Club emblem, name, initials, nickname or trademark registered by the Club Member, or a combination of such, may appear :
  1. Once only on the front of the shirt, providing it does not exceed an area of 100 square centimetres; and
  2. Once only anywhere on the shorts, providing it does not exceed an area of 50 square centimetres; and
  3. Once only on each sock, providing it does not exceed an area of 50 square centimetres

#### 10.4 **Clothing Manufacturer**

- i. On Football boots – The established mark, logo, name, or model/style of football boots or their manufacturer, or a combination of the same, may appear without restriction
- ii. On all other Clothing – The established mark, logo, name or model/style of a clothing manufacturer, or a combination of the same, may appear once only;
  1. On the shirt and on the shorts provided it is an area no greater than 20 square centimetres;
  2. On each of the goalkeeper's gloves, and on a goalkeeper's cap, provided such does not exceed an area of 20 square centimetres;
  3. On each of an outfield Player's gloves provided such does not exceed an area of 20 square centimetres;
  4. On the front and back on any t-shirt or any other item of clothing worn under the shirt provided such does not exceed an area of 20 square centimetres and this is not visible outside the playing shirts during the period of the Match;
  5. On undershorts worn under playing shorts provided such does not exceed an area of 20 square centimetres and this is not visible outside the playing shorts during the period in the Match

#### 10.5 **Numbers**

- i. On Football boots – A Player's shirt number may appear on his boots without restriction;
- ii. On all other Clothing – the Player Member's shirt number must be clearly legible and positioned in the centre of the back of the shirt;
- iii. The number should be between 20cm and 35cm in height;
- iv. The number may also appear on the front of the shorts which must correspond with the number on the shirt;
- v. The number on the shorts should be between 10cm and 15cm in height;
- vi. The officially designated logo or name of the League Competition or combination of the same may appear once only on each of the Player Member's shirt numbers providing the logo, name or combination does not exceed an area of 20 square centimetres. No other advertising or other marking is allowed on a Player Member's shirt number

#### 10.6 **Players' Names**

- i. On Football boots – a Player Member's name, including any appropriate nickname or initials, may appear on that Player Member's boots without



restriction. Other names, places, appropriate nicknames or numbers of personal significance to that Player may also appear on that Player Member's boots without restriction;

- ii. On all other Clothing – the name of the Player Member may appear on the back of shirts or tracksuits. The height of the lettering must not be greater than 7.5 centimetres;

## **11 SPONSOR DESIGNATIONS**

11.1 No sponsor advertising is permitted anywhere on the clothing of a Club/Team unless the GFA has approved such sponsorship in writing.

11.2 Once approved, the following sponsorship advertising by players on the field of play is permitted :-

- i. Playing Kit – On the Clothing of a Player on the field of play, the following areas shall be permitted to be used for advertising :-

1. One single area not exceeding 200 square centimetres on the front of the shirt;
2. One single area not exceeding 100 square centimetres on the back of the shirt;
3. One single area not exceeding 100 square centimetres on the back of the shorts;
4. One badge on the right side of the shirt.

- ii. Tracksuits and other clothing in the Technical Area – Advertising may appear on tracksuits, and other items of clothing other than the clothing of a Player, on the field of play during a Match in accordance with the size and locations set out in 11.2(i) above

- iii. The advertising carried on the tracksuits and other clothing worn by Player and Club Officials in the Technical Area can be either:

1. The same sponsor(s) as worn on the playing kit (home or away strips);
2. Be additional to the sponsors as worn on the playing kit;
3. A single sponsor that is an official partner of the relevant Division.

11.3 Teams may conclude sponsorship arrangements with different companies in respect of advertising permitted in 11.2(i) above for both their home and away strips.

11.4 One or more companies may be advertised and, in respect of any one company, one or more of their products. The same advertising must appear in the same form on the clothing of all Player Members and Team Officials wherever such advertising appears, throughout the entirety of the Match.

## **12 PLAYER IDENTIFICATION AND STRIP**

- 12.1 Before the commencement of each Season each Club shall allocate a different shirt number to each Player of its Team.
- 12.2 A Club shall likewise allocate a shirt number to any Player joining its Club during the Season.
- 12.3 Save with the prior written consent of the GFA, shirt numbers may only range between 1 and 99.
- 12.4 While he remains with the Club, a Player will retain his shirt number throughout the Season for which it was allocated.
- 12.5 Upon a Player leaving a Club, the shirt number allocated to him may be re-allocated.
- 12.6 When playing in League Matches each Player shall wear a shirt on the back of which shall be prominently displayed his shirt number and (if so wished) above that his surname or such other name as may be approved in writing by the GFA.
- 12.7 The Player's shirt number shall also appear on the front of his shorts.
- 12.8 The colour and design of the Club's shirt, shorts and socks (together, the "Kit") shall be submitted by the Club to the GFA by no later than 30 days prior to the commencement of the next Season.
- 12.9 The colour and design of the shirt and socks worn by the goalkeeper when playing in League Matches shall be such as to distinguish him from the other Players and from Match Officials.
- 12.10 The Team deemed to be playing at Home (the Team listed first on the latest published fixture list) must wear its designated Home Kit and the Team deemed to be playing Away (the Team listed second on the fixture list) must wear its designated Away Kit.
- 12.11 Where the Kit of two competing Teams are similar, the Team deemed to be playing Away (the Team listed second on the fixture list) must change its Kit unless alternative arrangements are mutually agreed by the two competing Teams in conjunction with the Match Officials.
- 12.12 The Kit cannot be so similar to the clothing worn by Match Officials that it would cause the colours to clash.
- 12.13 The captain of each Team appearing in a League Match shall wear an armband indicating his status as such.

### **13 MATCH OFFICIALS**

- 13.1 All League Matches will be administered and refereed by a Gibraltar FA Registered Referee, in accordance with the Gibraltar FA Referee Regulations as amended from time to time.

### **14 TEAM SHEETS**

- 14.1 Each competing Team shall accurately complete the team sheet which can be found in the COMET system, containing a list of Players, substitutes and corresponding shirt numbers (as per 14.2 below) by no later than 1 hour prior to kick-off;

- 14.2 A team sheet must be composed of the following persons :-

- i. A minimum of Seven (7) and a maximum of Eleven (11) starting Players (of which at least 4 must be a Home Grown Player);
- ii. A maximum of seven (7) substitutes ; and
- iii. A maximum of seven (7) Team officials who fulfil the following roles :
  - a. Head Coach (mandatory) ;
  - b. Assistant Coach (mandatory);
  - c. Physical Trainer;
  - d. Physiotherapist or GFA Accredited Sports Therapist (mandatory);
  - e. Doctor;
  - f. Team delegate; (mandatory)
  - g. Coaching Staff

- 14.2 Only the persons listed in 14.2 above named in the team sheet are allowed in the technical area.

- 14.3 No changes will be allowed after the deadlines set at 14.1 and 14.1 above, unless there is an injury to a player in the starting 11 prior to kick-off, in which case, a named substitute can replace the injured player. This will be done by a Match Official.

- 14.4 Save under exceptional circumstances, if team sheets are not completed within the deadlines above, a team will only be able to submit its starting Players as per 14.2. No named substitutes will be allowed on the bench, and no substitutions will be allowed prior or during the match.

- 14.5 The GFA shall use its best endeavours to ensure that the information provided for in COMET is correct at all times, however, as an IT system, there is always the risk of error, and as such, it is the sole responsibility of each Team to keep a record

of its active cautions and suspensions, and ensure that the information provided in each team sheet is correct and accurate and that the listed players and coaches are eligible to participate in accordance with GFA Rules.

- 14.6 The Match Officials will check each team Sheet in accordance with the GFA Referee Regulations.

## **15 CHECKING OF IDENTITY**

- 15.1 Players and officials mentioned in the team sheet are obliged to have with them the Gibraltar FA Identity Card.
- 15.2 The Gibraltar FA Identity Card of all persons listed on the team sheet may be checked by the Match Official(s) prior to kick off.
- 15.3 In the case where a player's identity could not be ascertained because he does not produce his Gibraltar FA Identity Card, the player will not be allowed to play. In the case of a Team official, he/she will not be allowed to sit in the technical area.
- 15.4 In the case of a protest, complaint, charge or investigation, the burden of proof as to the identity of a player or official taking part in a match shall rest with the player and his Team.

## **16 HOME GROWN PLAYER RULE**

- 16.1 In any match, a Team must have at least 4 Home Grown Players on the field of play at all times except in the circumstances set out at 16.3 below.
- 16.2 If a Team is found not to have complied with 16.1 above, the match will be declared a forfeit against the said Team, in accordance with the GFA Disciplinary Rules.
- 16.3 If during a match, a Team has exhausted its three permitted match substitutions and finds itself in breach of 16.1 as a result of injury, illness or suspension, then rule 16.1 will not apply and the match shall continue in breach of the rule.

## **17 INTERMEDIATE LEAGUE 'FEEDER' PLAYER RULE**

- 17.1 Players registered in Intermediate League teams may play in the League in accordance with Rule 17 of the Intermediate League Rules.

## **18 COACHING QUALIFICATIONS**

- 18.1 The Team Head Coach must hold one of the following minimum coaching qualifications :-
- i. A valid UEFA recognised Level 2 Coaching Licence;
  - ii. Valid UEFA coaching diploma which is equivalent or higher to the one required under 18.1(i) above; or

- iii. Started an education course for the diploma required under 18.1(i) or 18.1(ii) above. Simple registration for the required diploma is not sufficient for the purposes of these Rules.

## **19 MATCH BALL REQUIREMENTS**

- 19.1 The Gibraltar FA will provide the footballs to be used for each Match (the “Match Ball”).
- 19.2 On Match day, the Match Officials will provide a maximum of five (5) Match Balls for any given match.
- 19.3 Both Team delegates shall confirm the number of Match Balls provided prior to kick off, and shall ensure that these are returned to the Gibraltar FA match delegate(s) at the end of the game.
- 19.4 In the event that a Match Ball is lost/destroyed during a match, both Teams agree to pay the cost of the Match Ball within 7 days of the match in which the ball was lost/destroyed.
- 19.5 If the loss/destruction of a Match Ball arises from a deliberate act by one Team, the Team responsible for such act will pay the cost in full.
- 19.6 The Gibraltar FA will, in its sole discretion, decide whether an act is deliberate for the purposes of 19.5 above.

## **20 DISPUTES, COMPLAINTS & SPECIAL REQUESTS**

- 20.1 Any dispute or complaint by a Team regarding a match or another Team in relation to any matter applicable to the League, must be officially reported to the GFA within 48 hours from the conclusion of the match in question. The matter shall be dealt in accordance with the GFA Disciplinary Rules.
- 20.2 Any special request made by a Team in relation to a match must be made in writing to the General Secretary.
- 20.3 All requests must be made at least 24 hours prior to the match in question. The General Secretary may waive this time limit in exceptional circumstances.
- 20.4 With regards to requests for a minute silence prior to a match, this shall only be permitted under the following circumstances :
  - i. An international tragic event;
  - ii. A national tragic event;
  - iii. A national event e.g. Remembrance Sunday
  - iv. Observing respect for the death of individuals who have contributed to the Game in Gibraltar.
  - v. Death of a player or team official.

## **21 POLICIES AND REGULATIONS**

21.1 The following Statutes, Policies and Regulations apply to these Rules and all GFA Members must adhere to them during their participation in the League and as long as they are Members of the GFA :-

- i. Anti-Doping Regulations;
- ii. Social Media Policy;
- iii. Referee Regulations;
- iv. GFA Disciplinary Rules;
- v. Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players;

A copy of the above shall be made available on the official GFA Website , and it is the responsibility of each Team to ensure their registered players and staff are fully aware of the applicable rules and the repercussions in the event of their breach.

## **22 BREACH OF RULES**

22.1 Any breach of these Rules will be dealt with by the GFA Disciplinary Regulations

## **23 APPLICABILITY OF RULES**

23.1 These Rules have been adopted by the Board of Directors to regulate the 2019/2020 League Season.



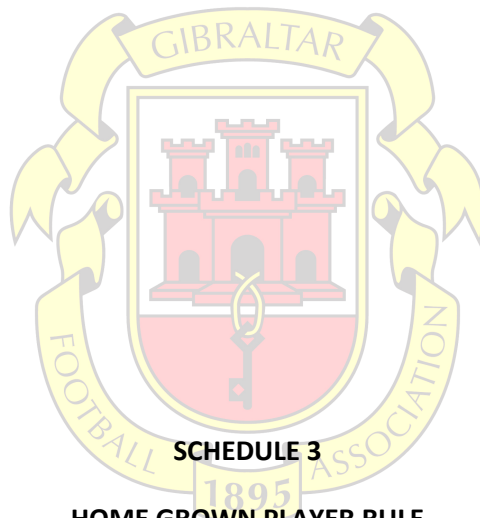
**SCHEDULE 1**

**GIBRALTAR NATIONAL LEAGUE**









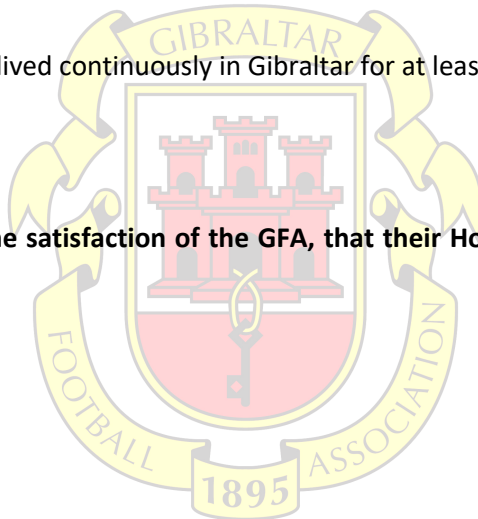
**SCHEDULE 3**  
**HOME GROWN PLAYER RULE**

## HOME GROWN PLAYER RULES – DEFINITIONS TO BE USED WITH SCHEDULE 5 & 6 BELOW

A Home Grown Player is a Player who is eligible for selection for the Gibraltar National Squad in accordance with the Article 6 of the FIFA Statutes which states as follows :

- (a) Only a Player Member in possession of a British passport shall be eligible to play for the national squads in any international or other match arranged by the Gibraltar FA.
- (b) In addition to being in possession of a British passport, the Player Member must fulfil at least one of the following conditions:-
  - i. He or she was born in Gibraltar.
  - ii. His or her biological mother or biological father was born in Gibraltar.
  - iii. His or her biological grandmother or grandfather was born in Gibraltar; or
  - iv. He has lived continuously in Gibraltar for at least two years .

**Each Team must prove, to the satisfaction of the GFA, that their Home-Grown Players satisfy the above requirements.**



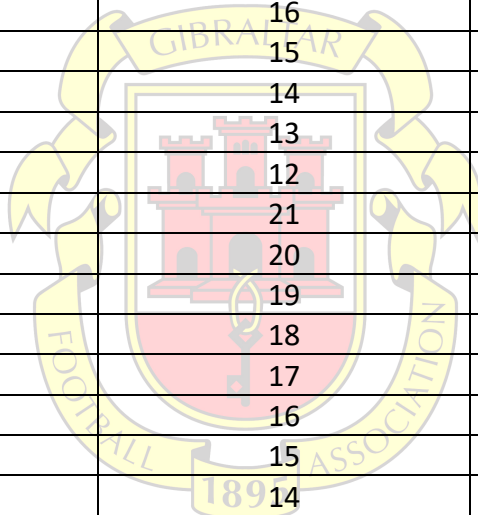
## SCHEDULE 4

### Squad Quotas

NON HOME GROWN PLAYERS	HOME GROWN PLAYERS "HGP"	TOTAL PERMITTED
17	8	25
17	7	24
17	6	23
17	5	22
17	4	21
16	9	25
16	8	24
16	7	23
16	6	22
16	5	21
16	4	20
15	10	25
15	9	24
15	8	23
15	7	22
15	6	21
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