

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

INTERPRETATION

SCHEDULE ONE:- GENERAL ORGANISATION

Article 1.01 – Title, Name and Trophies

Article 1.02 – Form and Organization

SCHEDULE TWO – REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

Article 2.01 – Eligibility

Article 2.02 – Conditions for Registration for Clubs

Articles 2.03 – Colours

Articles 2.04 – Players/Playing Equipment

Articles 2.05 – Club Management

Article 2.06 – Withdrawal

Article 2.07 – Change of Name, Ownership and Disbandment

SCHEDULE THREE – PLAYERS, REGISTRATION AND WELFARE

Article 3.01 - Registration of Player

Article 3.02 – Welfare of Players

Article 3.03 – Transfer of Players

Article 3.04 – Arbitration

Article 3.05 – Medicals

SCHEDULE FOUR – TECHNICALS

Article 4.01 – Fixture

Article 4.02 – Venues

Article 4.03 – Security

Article 4.04 – Responsibilities of State F.A

Article 4.05 – Match Balls/Ball Boys

Article 4.06 – Pre- match meeting

Article 4.07 – Intimidation and Harassment of Match Officials at Pre-Match Meetings

Article 4.08 – Commencement of Matches

Article 4.09 – Reserve Bench

Article 4.10 – Substitution

Article 4.11 – Duration of Game

Article 4.12 – Failure to Honour or Continue to Play Matches

Article 4.13 – Encroachment and Disruption of Matches

Article 4.14 – Closing of a Match

Article 4.15 – Point Scoring

Article 4.16 – Promotion/Relegation

Article 4.17 – Match Fixing

Article 4.18 – Publication of League Table



SCHEDULE FIVE – MATCH OFFICIALS AND OFFICIATING

Article 5.01 –Appointment of Match Officials

Article 5.02 - Welfare of Match Officials

Article 5.03 – Non-Appearance of Match Officials

Article 5.04 – Travel/Indemnity of Match Officials

Article 5.05 – Illegal Payment of Match Officials

SCHEDULE SIX – PROTEST AND APPEALS

Article 6.01 – Protest

Article 6.02 – Appeals, Fees and Procedures

SCHEDULE SEVEN – DISCIPLINE AND SANCTIONS

Article 7.01 – Discipline and Disciplinary Matters

Article 7.02 – Sanction/Assault on Match officials

SCHEDULE EIGHT – MEDIA

Article 8.01 – Press Representation at Match Venues

Article 8.02 – Video Coverage of League Matches

SCHEDULE NINE – GENERAL MATTERS

Article 9.01 – Team Song/Anthem, Logo and Flag

Article 9.02 – Fraud

Article 9.03 –Players Invited to National Team

Article 9.04 – Abscondment

Article 9.05 – Supporters Club

SCHEDULE TEN – MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR INTERPRETATION

In the Nigeria Football Federation rules and Regulations unless it is otherwise expressly provided or the context otherwise requires:

“FIFA” shall mean the Federation of international Football Federation.

“CAF” shall mean the Confederation of African Football

“WAFU” West African Football Union

“The League” shall mean Nation-Wide League One. (NLO)

“National Team” Shall include the super Eagles, the U-23 Olympic Team,

The U-20 Flying Eagles, the U-17 Golden Eaglets, the U-14 Team and any other National Team that NFF may constitute from time to time.

“FORCE MAJEUR” shall include but not limited to act of God, act of War, revolution, fire, flood, earthquake or other physical disaster, blockade, embargo, major strike or any cause which by exercise of reasonable care and diligence, the clubs teams, match officials, are unable to prevent.

“Supporter Club: shall mean the Supporters/Fans duly registered by the NFF. Such supporters club shall be registered with NFF through the state FA.

“FOOTBALL MATTERS” shall include Decisions/Actions of the Referee on the Pitch, Decisions/Actions of the NFF or any of its Committees, and Decisions of the Annual General Meeting of the NFF.

SCHEDULE ONE: - GENERAL ORGANISATION

ARTICLE 1.01 – TITLE, NAME AND TROPHIES

1.01(1). The Competition shall be called “The Nation-Wide League One” or any other names as may be decided by the NFF/NLO Board.

1.01(2). The Trophies/activities of the League shall be sponsored and remain the property of the Nation-Wide League One.

1.01(3). The Trophies shall be won by the club duly declared winner by the Nation-Wide League One.

1.01(4). All trophies won in the preceding season must be returned to the Nation-Wide League One Board 60 days before the last matches of the season. Failure to do so shall attract a fine of N100, 000.00 in addition to any other penalty as may be determined by the NLO.

ARTICLE 1.02 – FORM AND ORGANIZATION

1.02(1). The Nigeria Football Federation through their appointed/elected Board and Secretariat shall organize the Competition which shall be known and called Nation-Wide League One.

1.02(2). Nation-Wide League shall consist of Division 1 and Division 2 which shall known as the youth league to be played on home and away or at Zonal Centre's.

1.02(3). All League matches shall be played on home and away basis/ zonal basis and in accordance with FIFA/CAF Regulations and the Rules/Regulations of the NLO except or as directed by NLO Board based on prevailing situation.

1.02(4). At the end of the season, promotion and relegation shall be determined by NLO as follows:-

1. Division One – Eight Clubs to be promoted to the Nigeria National League (The 8 to be promoted shall be table topper from each of the 8 groups in division one), while sixteen (16) teams shall be relegated to division two. (The 16 teams to be relegated shall be the two bottom teams in the 8 groups)

2. Division Two (Youth League) – Sixteen teams will be promoted to Division One, two from each of the groups. While sixteen clubs will be relegated to State League, two bottom teams from each of the groups. While sixteen teams shall be promoted from the state league to division two.

SCHEDULE TWO – REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION

ARTICLE 2.01 – ELIGIBILITY

2.01(1). All Non – Professional clubs in Nigeria shall be eligible to play in the league for which they qualify, provided they are affiliated and registered with States Football Association and NLO.

2.01(2). They have fulfilled all conditions and terms set out by the NLO for qualification.

2.01(3). All Clubs must be an affiliate of a state and pay annual registration fee as determined by the Board of the NLO, any club in violation of this payment would be assumed to have withdrawn her participation in the league.

ARTICLE 2.02 – CONDITIONS FOR REGISTRATION

2.02(1). All clubs that have Affiliated/Registered and have satisfied all the conditions for participation have voluntarily put themselves under obligation to unconditionally abide by the League Rules/Regulations and the Statutes of NLO.

2.02(2). Notwithstanding the constitutional rights of clubs, players, supporters club, sports bodies, etc. to seek redress in court of law upon affiliation to NLO the above are deemed to have voluntarily renounced their rights to litigate over Football matters.

2.02(3). Any club/team, club official, players, supporters club etc, violating the provisions of Articles 2.02(1&2) shall be deemed to have voluntarily withdrawn its membership of the NLO and shall not be considered for re-admission until the court action is withdrawn.

2.02(4). Any club official, player, sport body, supporters club violating

Article 2.02(1&2) shall also be sanctioned as the NLO deems fit.

2.02(5). Principal Officer of the clubs shall sign an Undertaking to that effect for and on behalf of their clubs.

2.02(6). All clubs registering any player must submit a copy of the License of the player used in the previous year before such a player shall be eligible for registration.

ARTICLE 2.03 – COLOURS

2.03(1). Each club participating in the League shall register with the NLO its colours of jerseys, pants and hose, which shall not be in conflict with the design of the National Team of Nigeria.

2.03(2). Clubs shall also register alternative colours of Jerseys, which shall be used to resolve problems of clash of colours.

2.03(3). Each club shall play its home matches with the first choice colour while it shall use its 2nd choice colour for away matches. A club may however be permitted to play in the alternative colour only if there is a clash of colour or in unforeseen circumstances acceptable to the match officials.

2.03(4). The Jerseys and pants must be boldly and clearly numbered serially – pants in front and jerseys at the back (1 to 35) measuring “9” Length and “4” on pants. Any club that numbers its Jersey to exceed 35 shall be fined the sum of N20, 000.00 which should be paid before next match.

2.03(5). The colours registered for the League shall remain the registered colours throughout the League season and shall also remain the registered colours of the Club.

2.03(6). Pinned numbering on jerseys is prohibited. Any player wearing pinned jersey shall not be allowed to play.

2.03(7). Players can only play League matches wearing jersey numbers allocated to them during the registration. Violation will attract a fine of N10, 000.00 per defaulting player in every League match.

2.03(8). In the event of clash in colours between two clubs, the away club shall change to its alternative colour provided the home club is wearing their registered first choice colours. Away teams must therefore take along alternative colours.

2.03(9). If the clash of colours affects the Goal –Keeper's Colours, the Goalkeeper shall change to his registered alternative jersey. Clubs wearing unregistered or unapproved colours shall be liable to a fine of N50, 000.00.

2.03(10). a. Clubs wearing unregistered colour shall be fined N50, 000.00 per match.

b. Clubs wearing adverts on their Jerseys must pay 10% of their sponsorship fee to NLO.

2.03(11). It shall be an offence for any Club/Player to wear the National Team Jersey to play League matches.

ARTICLE 2.04 – PLAYERS/PLAYING EQUIPMENT

2.04(1). All players shall put on football kits that are in conformity with FIFA Law 4 of the law of the game, It shall be an offence punishable by a fine of N10, 000.00 for a player to wear the anklet over his hose or fail to wear the hose up to his knee level.

2.04 (2) Players name shall be boldly written at the back of their jerseys and maintain a permanent jersey number for the minimum duration of a football season. any player(s) who flout this order shall not be allowed to play.

ARTICLE 2.05 – CLUB MANAGEMENT

2.05(1). Club management shall be properly constituted with defined functions.

2.05(2). The management shall comprise of at least the following officers: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Team manager, Chief Coach/Technical Adviser, and Medical team

ARTICLE 2.06 – WITHDRAWAL

2.06(1). Any club that withdraws expressly shall forfeit its registration fees and status.

2.06(2). Any Club that withdraws from the League after the fixtures have been made but before the commencement shall be liable to a fine of N50, 000.00 payable to the NLO. (The State FA shall be notified of the sanction and the affected Club must pay the fine before they can be involved in any state football activities) The club shall be withdrawn from the league completely and a replacement be made from the lower division among the best losers who fails to secure promotion.

2.06(3). If a club withdraws after the first round, it shall be expelled from the competition and will not be eligible for readmission. All its results of matches (Home and Away) played shall be cancelled.

2.06(4). No Club can withdraw after the commencement of the season. If a club withdraws; it shall be expelled from the competition and will not be eligible for readmission. All officials of such clubs shall be banned for (2) years.

ARTICLE 2.07 – CHANGE OF NAME, OWNERSHIP AND DISBANDMENT

2.07(1). Change of ownership shall be between two (2) parties involved and the details shall be communicated to the NLO for approval.

2.07(2). The new club owner shall pay the sum of N100, 000.00 to the NLO and if the new club changes its base/venue shall be liable to pay the sum of N50, 000.00 alongside letter of acceptance from the new host State FA.

2.07(3). Any club registered with the NLO that intends to disband shall give NLO in writing through its state FA, at least three months notice of such intention.

SCHEDULE THREE – PLAYERS, REGISTRATION AND WELFARE

ARTICLE 3.01 – REGISTRATION OF PLAYERS.

3.01(1) **Teams shall be allowed to register a minimum of 18 players before the commencement of the League.**

3.01(2). All League clubs in Division One shall be restricted to registration of only 35 players per League Season, of which 15 of such players to be registered must be U-19.

3.01(3). All League clubs in Division Two shall be restricted to registration of only 35 players per League Season, **of which non shall be above the age of 19 years.**

3.01(4). Five (5) more players may be registered during the mid season window. This depends on the number of previously registered players by the team before the commencement of the season, except through substitution by elimination

3.01(5). In registering the players, full names (Surnames, Other Names, and Date of Birth) shall be given. The clubs shall certify that such registered players are qualified to take part in the League in accordance with the rules and regulations of the competition. Clubs that give false information shall be sanctioned as the Board may deem fit.

3.01(6). Registration of players shall be on the NLO prescribed documents viz, registration forms, players Licenses. The document shall be submitted to the NLO on behalf of the players by an Accredited Officer of the club. The License issued to the registering club shall confirm the eligibility of the players to play/participate in League matches.

3.01(7). Players must personally sign their License. If the NLO discovered through any means that a player did not sign his license the player shall be banned for one year/season and the club be fined N100, 000.00 payable in 14days.

3.01(8). Only Player who holds valid players License shall be eligible to participate in the League. In case of transfer, the players must have fulfilled all the necessary transfer procedures and have been cleared accordingly before being eligible to play/participate in the League, any club that uses an unduly registered player shall be made to lose the match or all the matches that this player was discovered to have feature in previous games, and the point will be awarded to the opponent by 3 points and 3 goals, with further sanction from the NLO Secretariat .

3.01(9). If a players License is Lost/Destroyed, the NLO shall issue a certified true copy on the payment of N10, 000.00 per License. No player shall be allowed to play with a photocopied License.

3.01(10). Foreign–Based Nigeria players shall not be eligible for registration, unless such player(s) are properly cleared and transferred, and all relevant documents are produced.

3.01(11). A player can only register and play for one club at a time during the season. Except if he is duly cleared/registered to join another club by his former club.

3.01(12). Transfer of players shall be negotiable except if the player is not under any contract. But if the player is indebted to his former club, he may not be free to leave.

3.01(13). Any player found guilty of double registration shall be banned for a minimum period of one year and the club will be fined N100,000 payables in 14days.

3.01(14). Any Club found guilty of intentional involvement in double registration of a player shall be fined N100, 000.00 and in addition face any other sanctions as NLO may deem necessary.

3.01(15). It shall be mandatory for all clubs to provide comprehensive insurance Policy for all its registered players prior to registration. Any club that did not present insurance certificate for the players and officials shall not be allowed to partake in the league.

ARTICLE 3.02 – WELFARE OF PLAYERS

3.02(1). All players shall be covered by comprehensive Insurance Policies from reputable Insurance Companies duly verified by the NLO with a minimum benefit as stated below:

- 1. Death: N500,000.00,**
- 2. Permanent Disability: N250,000.00,**
- 3. Injuries: N50,000**

3.02(1a). Clubs must get clarifications from NLO secretariat before engaging any other Insurance company different from the accredited company by the Secretariat.

3.02(2). All players shall produce a comprehensive Medical Certificate of fitness from a reputable Medical Firm recognized by Nigeria Nation-Wide League (NLO) FIFA Medical officer. Clubs without this clearance shall not be registered for the season.

3.02(3). All disputes arising between players and clubs shall be settled by the Nigeria Federation Arbitration Committee whose decisions shall be final and binding on all parties.

ARTICLE 3.03 – TRANSFER OF PLAYERS

3.03(1). The first transfer window shall be opened at the middle of the first round.

3.03(2). The Second transfer window shall be opened during the break between the first and second round.

3.03(3). Transfer of players from one club to the other shall be on negotiation provided it still during the season. But if the player has amateur status [No Contract] he may be allowed to join a club of his choice.

3.03(4). It shall be a punishable offence for any club to direct or indirectly attempt to induce any player of another Non- Professional club.

3.03(5). At the end of the first stanza and before the beginning of the second round, transfer of players shall close.

3.03(6). A copy of transfer transaction on any player shall be submitted to NLO. Failure of which shall attract N5, 000.00 fine.

3.03(7). Shares of NLO transfer to NLO shall be N5, 000.00 while state F.A will receive N2, 500.00 only, in a situation of international transfer of a player 2% shall be paid to NLO.

3.03(8). Players whose clubs were disbanded or withdrawn from the league shall automatically become a free player and can join any club their choice.

ARTICLE 3.04 – PLAYERS/COACHES ARBITRATION

3.04(1). The NFF Arbitration Committee shall handle all disputes arising from transfer of players. The decisions of the Arbitration Committee shall be final and binding on all parties concerned.

3.04(2). Failure by any club to comply with the decisions of the Arbitration Committee within 21 days from the date of the decision shall be sanctioned as the NLO may deem fit.

3.04(3). No dispute between club(s) and Player(s) should hinder the player from playing for a club of his choice.

3.04(4). Arbitration between player and club may progress while a player is allowed to continue his playing career before final determination of the case. The player can be given a waiver to play by the NLO pending the determination of the arbitration, by NFF Arbitration

ARTICLE 3.05 – MEDICALS

3.05(1). Clubs shall have a medical team made up of Doctor, Nurse, Physiotherapist and a Masseur to service their home and away matches. Non- provision of Medical Personnel by clubs shall not be accepted by the NLO and match officials should not officiate in such match.

3.05(2). Clubs must subject all their players and officials to thorough medical examination before signing them on. Such medical certificates of fitness must be submitted to the NLO as a pre-condition for registration of the clubs.

3.05(3). Clubs must produce a comprehensive Medical Certificate of fitness from a reputable Medical firm recognized by Nation - Wide League One (NLO).

3.05(4). Clubs are to carry out comprehensive laboratory tests quarterly on their players and officials. The result must be forwarded to the Nigeria Football Federation and NLO.

3.05(5). Clubs shall ensure that their medical officers keep detailed up to date medical records of a players. When a player's registration is transferred, the transferring club shall make such record available to the new club.

SCHEDULE FOUR – TECHNICAL

ARTICLE 4.01 – FIXTURES

4.01(1). The NLO shall draw League Fixtures electronically and circulate to all concerned.

4.01(2). It shall be unlawful for any person or group of persons to print, or circulate or sell unauthorized fixtures.

ARTICLE 4.02 – VENUES

4.02(1). Venues chosen by clubs shall be of minimum FIFA Standard with good turf and shall be inspected at least 3 months before the commencement of the season.

4.02(2). League matches shall be played at venues selected by clubs and approved by the Nigeria Nation-Wide League One (NLO) after inspection.

4.02(3). Match venues shall not be allowed for training purposes. All clubs must have training grounds, which shall also be inspected before the League commences.

4.02(4). There shall be a functional Score board in every venue. In its absence, a manual scoreboard with a black background (minimum size 8x5 meters) should be put in use.

4.02(5). Decent substitution boards with a minimum measurement of 14 inches x 10 inches should be used in each venue. It shall be an offence to write with chalk on substitution boards. A fine of N5, 000.00 per match shall be imposed for use of chalk. Match Commissioners must report offending clubs.

4.02(6). All venues must have fortified perimeter fencing with a minimum height of 2 meters.

4.02(7). All match venues must be properly maintained all through the season and shall have functional dressing rooms for all teams and officials.

4.02(8). On agreement between two clubs and approved by the Nation-Wide League One (NLO) the home and away matches of two clubs may be played on the same venue.

4.02(9). The NLO reserves the right to select alternative venues for clubs. Its decision in this regard shall be final.

4.02(10). Separate stands shall be provided for supporters of participating clubs.

4.02(11). The Following items are banned from all match venues.

I. Bottle/can Drinks

II. Alcoholic Drinks

III. All forms of narcotics

Match Commissioners in conjunction with the heads of the security shall ensure compliance before commencement of matches.

4.02(12). The Home team takes charge of his home matches gate taking, and the following percentages of the proceeds from gate taking shall be distributed as follows (5% to the Host Football Association, 5% to the Venue for Facility maintenance, while the Club takes 90%).

4.02(13). First Aid medical services are compulsory at all match venues Home clubs and state FA shall provide Stretcher and Ambulances Equipped with basic tools at match venues failure to do so this shall attract a fine of N20, 000.00

4.02(14). The NLO for reason of poor standard, hooliganism, inadequate safety and security, depreciation or damaged of facilities, etc. reserve the right to declare previously approved venues unfit for use during the season for any specified period.

ARTICLE 4.03 – SECURITY

4.03(1). A minimum of 20 law enforcement agents must be present before the start of any game. However, match Commissioners may commence matches if at least 15 Law enforcement agents are on ground, the law enforcement agents may be Police, Civil Defense, Man O' War, or any approved by NLO

4.03(2). Four (4) of the security Personnel shall be specifically detailed to the match officials.

4.03(3). Where necessary the security personnel shall have the compliment of police dogs or mounted troops.

4.03(4). Ten minutes to the end of every match, all gates must be opened to avoid last minute stampede.

ARTICLE 4.04 – RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STATES FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

4.04(1). The states FA being representative of the NFF shall perform the statutory functions with regards to overall control and security during matches. An Association shall carry out this function with the cooperation and advice from the NLO and clubs under its jurisdiction.

4.04(2). The States Football Association shall on behalf of clubs receive and accommodate match officials in Hotel to be arranged and paid for by the clubs.

4.04(3). The States Association shall on behalf of clubs under their Jurisdiction convene pre-match meetings and cooperate with the match Commissioners who shall supervise the pre-match meetings.

4.04(4). If as a result of the non-arrival of the appointed Referees and it becomes necessary to secure Referees from a neighboring State, the State Football Association shall carry out this duty on behalf of the home club.

4.04(5). It shall be the responsibility of the home Association in conjunction with the home club to provide adequate and effective security before, during, and after any match.

4.04(6). If a match fails to take place due to inadequate security, upon a written guarantee by the host Football Association, and the home club, the match shall be played the next day and all reasonable expenses in relation to the match officials and visiting team shall be borne by the home team.

4.04(7). However, if on the second day the match fails to hold due to ineffective security, the home team shall lose the match by 3 points 3 goals and in addition face any other sanctions as the NLO may deem appropriate.

4.04(8). Only the MC has the prerogative power to confirm security situation of any match and if it unsafe he (MC) shall communicate with NLO his unbiased decision.

4.04(9). The State F.A should be alive to their responsibility by making sure that information from NLO/NFF are communicated to their affiliated clubs on time. Failure to do such will not be taken as an excuse, and the Host F.A and the club shall be punished. (Both shall be sanctioned if the Club was copied in the information given to the State FA)

ARTICLE 4.05 – MATCH BALLS/BALL BOYS

4.05(1). Ball boys shall have uniform kits (Vest and Canvass) provided by States FA in conjunction with the clubs

4.05(2). At least 8 standard match balls approved by the NLO shall be provided by the home club for all matches failing which the club shall be sanctioned.

4.05(3). If a case of non-release of balls during matches is reported such venues/clubs shall be fined N50, 000.00

4.05(4). If a match is abandoned due to non – availability of balls, the home club shall lose the match by 3 points 3 goals to the opponent or the score at the time of abandonment, whichever is higher.

ARTICLE 4.06 – PRE- MATCH MEETING

4.06(1). It is mandatory for all League clubs to attend pre-match meeting with necessary requirements.

4.06(2). After due consultations with a match commissioner, the State FA shall convey to the clubs the venue and time of the meeting.

4.06(3). The pre-match meeting shall be held either on the eve of the match or 10.00am on the match day as may be determined by the match commissioner after consultation with host state FA/club.

4.06(4). Any club that fails to attend shall be fined the sum of N20, 000.00 in addition to any other penalty the NLO may decide. Such fine shall be paid to the NLO before the next home match.

4.06(5). Any club that reports for a pre-match meeting 15 minutes after the scheduled time shall be fined N5, 000.00 and N10, 000.00 for lateness for 20 minutes and above. Such fines shall be paid to the NLO immediately or before their next home match.

ARTICLE 4.07 – INTIMIDATION AND HARRASSEMENT OF MATCH OFFICIALS BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER MATCH.

4.07(1). Intimidation/ Harassment of match officials by Clubs supporter(s) fans or club officials before, during, and after the match are prohibited such offender shall be punished and the team officials sanctioned

4.07(2). Where the match officials are harassed or intimidated match Commissioners are empowered to call off or discontinue with the meetings/matches.

4.07(3). Upon receipt of reports from a match Commissioner or centre Referee, the match shall be awarded against defaulting club by 3 point 3 goals.

4.07(4). The defaulting Club and Officials shall in addition to the above face severe disciplinary actions as may be determined by the NLO.

ARTICLE 4.08 – COMMENCEMENT OF MATCHES

4.08(1). All matches shall commence at 4.00pm prompt, except as directed by NLO

4.08(2). Any match that commences 30 minutes later than the scheduled kick-off time shall be deemed a “No Match” and the club responsible for the kick- off shall forfeit the match by 3 point 3 goals unless there is a force majeure acceptable to the NLO.

4.08(2b). Even if the match was played for security reasons, the NLO upon receive of the match officials report, shall cancel the match, and article 4.08(2) shall be activated.

4.08(3). Players shall march into the field of play side by side. The Match Commissioner and Centre Referee shall ensure compliance.

4.08(4). If a match fails to end at full time of 90 minutes as a result of late kick off, the club responsible shall be made to pay the expenses for the continuation the following day. Failure to comply the club shall forfeit the match by 3goals 3points no matter the scores at stoppage.

4.08(5). Match reports must reach the NLO Secretariat 48hours after the match. The summary of the report should be sent by SMS immediately after the match to NLO dedicated Office line on the match officials form. Failure to comply with the above shall attract sanction by delisting the Referees and Match Commissioner from the NLO matches.

ARTICLE 4.09 – RESERVE BENCH

4.09(1). Only 16 accredited members of each club shall sit on its reserve bench (Nine players and seven Officials).

4.09(2). All persons on the reserve bench shall be properly dressed in acceptable sports attire, preferable tract suits or suits, not in flowing native dress. (Corporately dressed.)

4.09(3). The technical area of each side should be in accordance with FIFA laws of the game.

4.09(4). Any violation of Article 4.09(1-3) shall attract fine of N30, 000.00.

ARTICLE 4.10 – SUBSTITUTION OF PLAYERS AND TEAM LIST

4.10(1). Only five substitutes from the list of Nine reserve players may be used at any stage of a match as approved FIFA, provided the player who has either been substituted or sent off the field of play due to misconduct is not used again.

4.10(2). The team Manager of each club shall complete and sign the team list portion of the referee report before the kick off.

ARTICLE 4. 11 – DURATION OF GAME

4.11(1). The duration of each game shall be 90 minutes playing time 45 minutes for each half, with a half time interval of 15 minutes whistle to whistle.

ARTICLE 4.12 – FAILURE TO HONOUR OR CONTINUE TO PLAY MATCHES

4.12(1). Any club that fails to honor its fixture obligation without any reason acceptable to the NLO shall be fined the sum of N100, 000. 00 payables to the NLO in addition to all reasonable expenses incurred by the home team. If the match is rescheduled; the erring club shall pay all expenses in respect of the match.

4.12(2). If the erring club fails to pay within the period of 14days, it shall not be eligible to play any of its matches until the fine is paid. Such matches shall be awarded to the opponent by 3 point 3 goals.

4.12(3). If the NLO is convinced that lateness to a match by a club is deliberate, the action shall be regarded as failure to honor a match and Article4.12 (1) shall apply.

4.12(4). If a game is disrupted for a period of five (5) minutes in a match or till the expiration of full time of any half, the offender or on whose behalf the crime is committed shall loose the game by 3 points and 3 goals or the score remains at the time of abandonment. (Which ever is higher).

4.12(4b). The 3points 3goals shall be applied by NLO even if the team that discontinued resumes back after 5 minutes. The NLO judgment shall be based on the MC/ Referees Report.

4.12(5). The club shall in addition pay a fine of N50, 000. 00 to NLO within Fourteen (14) days.

4.12(6). If the club fails to pay within the period Article 4.12(2) shall apply and continually applied till the fine is paid

4.12(7). a. If a club in division one fails to honor two matches during the regular season, such a club shall automatically be withdrawn from the league and all points earned and against shall be deducted.

4.12(7) b. If a club in Division Two fails to honor 2 matches, such a club shall be withdrawn automatically from league, and all points earned and against shall be deducted

4.12(7) d. During Play-off/Zonal League, any Club that fails to honor last match of the competition will be considered as an accord and will be automatically relegated and if already relegated, will be withdrawn from the League.

4.12(8). If a club vehicle breaks down on its way to a match, the club must send an official to the venue of the match to report at the pre-match meeting. The match shall then be played the next day. If the club still fails to show up it shall lose the match to its opponent by 3 points 3 goals, in addition to a payment of N50, 000.00 to the NLO.

4.12(9). Where the NLO is satisfied that there is an accord to fail to honor a scheduled match, it shall ban both clubs for at least one (1) League season and they shall be relegated automatically.

4.12(10). On no account must a club refuse to play a scheduled match on grounds of inadequate security if the appointed match officials are satisfied with the security arrangement. Any club violating this article shall be liable to a fine of N100, 000.00 in addition to the forfeiture of the match

ARTICLE 4.13 – ENCROACHMENT/DISRUPTION OF MATCHES

4.13(1). No club supporter, player/official shall encroach on the field of play during a game. If any supporter, official or player encroaches on the field of play to cause discontinuation of game, the club on whose behalf the disturbance is caused shall lose the match by 3 goals, 3 points and in addition pay a fine of N100,000.00 to NLO within 7 days of the incidence.

4.13(2). Any supporters club that persistently cause disorder either at home or away shall be banned from all League match venues.

4.13(3). The NLO reserve the right to cause the club with violent supporters to pay for damages for which they might be held responsible for before, during and after any match.

4.13(4). If a match ends in crisis, the club responsible and stadium shall be sanctioned.

4.13(5). The club responsible for the crisis shall also be fined N100, 000.00

4.13(6). In case of hooliganism, first offending club shall be banned for 3 matches, in the first instance, and six (6) match ban for a second occurrence. In the event that it's zonal league, any club with violent conduct shall be expelled.

ARTICLE 4.14 – CLOSING OF A MATCH

4.14(1). To encourage fair play, show appreciation to spectators and eliminate hooliganism, a match shall be deemed to have been completed on the performances of the following processes:

- I. At final whistle, both teams shall assemble at the centre circle.
- II. The assistant Referee I and II shall join the Referee in the centre circle.
- III. The player and match officials shall wave to the spectators.
- IV. The players and referees shall thereafter walk out in file.

This process shall mark the completion of a match, the result notwithstanding.

4.14(2). It shall be an offence punishable with a fine of N20,000.00 for any team(s) or player(s) or referee to shun this process unless there is a force majeure acceptable to NLO. Such a fine is payable before the next home match.

4.14(3). It shall also be an offence for a match commissioner not to report non-compliance of this directive.

ARTICLE 4.15 – POINTS SCORING

4.15(1). For League matches, points shall be scored as follows:-

- I. Three (3) Points for a win
- II. One (1) for a draw
- III. No points for a loss

ARTICLE 4.16 – PROMOTION/RELEGATION

4.16(1). The winner of the League competition shall be the club that has scored the highest number of points at the conclusion of the League.

4.16(2). If there is a tie among clubs on points, the winner shall be the club with the highest goal difference.

4.16(3). If two or more clubs have the same goal difference, the following shall be applied to determine the winner.

- a) The team that has greater number of goals in its favour.
- b) The result of matches played between the clubs involved (home and away).
- c) If A and B above remain same the winner shall be decided by lot.

ARTICLE 4.17 – MATCH FIXING

4.17(1). Any club/official or player or referee who by whatever arrangement with any other person(s) or organization influences or attempted to influence the result of a match either within or outside, shall be deemed guilty of gross misconduct. On confirmation of such allegation, the following shall apply:

- i. Fine of 500, 000.00 shall be imposed on the erring clubs.
- ii. The result of the match shall also be cancelled.
- iii. In addition to the above, NLO may impose other sanctions as it may deem fit.
- iv. Any person(s)/club official(s) found guilty or may have masterminded the act shall be banned for a minimum period of two (2) years.

ARTICLE 4.18 – PUBLICATION OF LEAGUE TABLE

4.18(1). The NLO shall release periodically League Table showing the position of each club in the League.

4.18(2). Only the League table released by the NLO shall be authentic.

4.18(3). All clubs that have protests, complaints and observations on the League Table shall forward same within 72 hours of the Publication to the NLO Secretariat for consideration.

4.18(4). After Protest complaints and or observations have been looked into, the League Table shall be updated to reflect any changes arising there from.

4.18(5). No protest, on the League table shall be entertained after the League Champion for the year has been declared and ratified by the Nigeria Football Federation AGA.

SCHEDULE FIVE – MATCH OFFICIALS/OFFICIATING

ARTICLE 5.01 – APPOINTMENT OF MATCH OFFICIALS

5.01(1). Referees and Assistant Referees shall be appointed by the Referees Committee for matches while Match Commissioner will be appointed by Match Commissioners Appointment Committee.

5.01(2). The Centre Referee and Match Commissioner shall be appointed from another state other than the hosting state.

5.01(3). States Football Association shall be notified at least one week in advance about the appointments of match officials.

5.01(4). It shall be the responsibility of states FA to inform promptly such match officials. Failure on the part of any state FA to discharge this responsibility effectively, resulting in non- appearance of match officials shall be deemed as an offence punishable by a fine of N30,000.00

ARTICLE 5.02 WELFARE OF MATCH OFFICIALS

5.02(1). Match officials shall be accommodated in decent, standard and accessible Hotels with Light, Television, Air-Conditioner and built- in – toilet facilities.

5.02(2). They shall be given adequate security before, during, and after a match, result notwithstanding.

5.02(3). All match officials must be accommodated together in one Hotel. Private arrangements and or payment in lieu of accommodation is prohibited.

5.02(4). Any state FA/Club that accommodates match officials in sub-standard Hotels shall be sanctioned.

5.02(5). In each match, the Match Commissioner, Referee, and Reserve Referee inclusive shall be paid in accordance with the NLO approved rates.

ARTICLE 5.-3 – NON-APPEARANCE OF MATCH OFFICIALS.

5.03(1). If a Match Commissioner fails to appear for a match, the centre Referee shall double (Act) as Match Commissioner/Referee.

5.03(2). Only Referees and Assistant Referees on the NFF approved list shall be used as fourth officials and as substitute for appointed match officials, for matches within the level of the competition for which they have been classified. It is only in the absence of such category of officials in a particular state, shall fourth officials and substitutes from the immediate low cadre division be considered.

5.03(3). In the event where any of the match officials did not attend the pre-match meeting or fail to arrive the match 3 hours before kickoff time, it will be assumed that he/she is not available for the match, thereby the host FA will now contact the neighboring State FA for appointment of Centre Referee from approved list of Referees.

5.03(4). If not, the match shall be played not later than 24 hours. Under no circumstances should teams mutually agree to the use of two or more home officials in a match in the event of non- appearance of designated match officials. Except in the case appointed AR I and AR II.

5.03(5). If a match is postponed for 24 hours, all additional expenses of the match officials shall be borne by the home club. The bill shall be forwarded to the NLO for consideration based on sincerity of the club.

5.03(6). If appointed match officials refuse to honor any match and it was established that they were duly notified, such match officials shall be black listed.

5.03(7). On no account should match officials swap matches.

ARTICLE 5.04 – TRAVEL/INDEMNITY OF MATCH OFFICIALS

5.04(1). The Indemnity of the match officials shall be as follows:

<i>Match Commissioner:</i>	<i>N15,000.00</i>
<i>Center Referee:</i>	<i>N12,000.00</i>
<i>Assistant Referee 1</i>	<i>N10,000.00</i>
<i>Assistant Referee 2</i>	<i>N10,000.00</i>
<i>Reserve Referee</i>	<i>N5,000.00</i>

ARTICLE 5.05 – ILLEGAL PAYMENT TO MATCH OFFICIALS

5.05(1). It is gross misconduct for any state Football Association, Club, Official/Member, player, Referee/Assistant to offer or attempt to offer either direct or indirectly any consideration whatsoever to another state Federation or club or any Referee/Assistant Referee appointed to officiate in a match with a view to influencing the conduct/result of the match or act in sympathy during officiating.

5.05(2). Any state Football Association, club official member, player, Referee/Assistant Referee found guilty of Article 5.05(1) shall be banned for two years while the result of the match it already played and won by the offending club shall be nullified.

5.05(3). It is also a punishable offence for any person(s) mentioned in Article 5.05(1) to accept any such consideration. Anybody involved shall be expelled from all NLO activities.

5.05(4). Any person(s), Club, club/officials found guilty of masterminding the act shall be banned for a minimum period of two (2) years.

SCHEDULE SIX – PROTESTS AND APPEALS

ARTICLE 6.01 PROTESTS

6.01(1). All protests from clubs relating to the conduct or result of any match shall be forwarded in writing to the NLO within 24 hours after the match after the match (Sundays and Public Holidays exclusive), accompanied by a protest fee of N100, 000.00 payable to NLO.

6.01(2). A copy of the protest shall be forwarded to the club against whom the protest is directed by the NLO.

6.01(3). If a protest is sustained, the protest fee shall be returned.

6.01(4). Protest against qualification or eligibility of players must be stated on the official Match Commissioners/Referees Match report forms and must be counter-signed by the officials or captain of both teams. In the case of eligibility, the match commissioner and the centre Referee shall take a photograph with players against whom the protest is made before the commencement of the match. The match Commissioner shall submit the photographs with his report to the NLO.

This should however, be confirmed within 24 hours after the match and must be accompanied by a fee of N100, 000.00 in cash or certified Bank draft made payable to the NLO.

6.01(5). Protest relating to the field of play and appurtenances of the game shall be looked into after the pre-match meeting for any shortcoming to be corrected before the match.

6.01(6). A match shall not be postponed or delayed as a result of a protest, unless it is related to the ground being unsafe for play.

6.01(7). If a match is postponed in order to make the ground fit for play, it shall be played the next day. The home club shall be responsible for all reasonable expenses incurred by the visiting team and match officials for the one extra-day stay. To be specific

6.01(8). All protests by clubs shall clearly indicate the grounds on which they are based and addressed to the Chief Operating Officer (NLO) through the State Football Association.

6.01(9). Protest properly lodged with a match Commissioner at the match venue and accompanied by appropriate protest fees shall be accepted by the NLO.

6.01(10). All protest cases must be reported to the match officials and the club against which the protest is made. Failure will make the protest not to be entertained by NLO.

6.01(11). Verbal protest made to and duly recorded by the match commissioner or centre Referee shall not be accepted except committed writing and accompanied by the appropriate fee.

6.01(12). At the hearing of any protest, the affected club may be invited at its own expense to tender relevant documents (no Matter from whatever source) and call in as many witnesses that are necessary for effective prosecution or defense of the case Legal representation and Press coverage are forbidden.

6.01(13). Any club that refuses to appear before any appropriate Committee of the NLO after due invitation must accept whatever verdict that might be pronounced.

6.01(14). The Board of NLO/NFF or Disciplinary Committee reserves the right to cause a club, member/player found guilty of any violation of rules or lodging frivolous protest to pay part or full cost of all hearing expenses.

6.01(15). Protests during Zonal play-off shall be treated by Zonal coordinators In-charge of such zones and any decision taken must be ratified by NLO before its implemented.

ARTICLE 6.02 – APPEALS, FEES AND PROCEDURES

6.02(1). If a club is dissatisfied with the verdict of the Disciplinary Committee, it reserves the right to appeal to the Appeals Committee that might be set up in line with the statutes of NFF for the purpose of hearing the appeal only.

6.02(2). Every appeal must indicate clearly and fully the ground on which it is based and must be lodged in writing to the Secretary General of the NFF through the state Football Association within 48 hours of the receipt of the verdict.

6.02(3). An appeal shall be accompanied by a fee of N200, 000.00 that shall be refunded if the appeal is sustained.

6.02(4). The decisions of the Appeals Committee on any football issue shall be final and binding on all parties and shall not be a subject of litigation in court.

SCHEDULE SEVEN – DISCIPLINE AND SANCTIONS

ARTICLE 7.01 – DISCIPLINE/DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

7.01(1). A player who receives two yellow cards at different matches during the competition shall automatically miss the next immediate match. Walk over match not included.

7.01(2). A player who receives a red card during a match shall mandatorily miss the next match, which may be increased to two (2) or more if the Disciplinary Committee considers the offence brave enough.

7.01(3). A player who receives three (3) red cards during the League shall be suspended for the rest of the season as applicable.

7.01(4). For every yellow card offence, a player shall be fined N5, 000.00 and N10, 000.00 for a red card.

7.01(5). A player or official sent off the field of play for any offence shall retire into the dressing room.

ARTICLE 7.02 – SANCTIONS

7.02(1). The NLO/NFF may impose any of the following disciplinary sanctions on any club, official, player, or state Football Association if found guilty of contravening any of its Rules/Regulations.

- a) Caution***
- b) A Censure***
- c) A Fine***
- d) Cancellation of Match***
- e) Deduction or Cancellation of Points***
- f) Ban on Stadium***
- g) Movement of a team to different venues for its home matches***
- h) Organizing matches to be played on neutral grounds in another state***
- i) Expulsion from the competition or any NLO/States Football Association organized activities.***

The Nation-Wide League One can impose any of the above disciplinary sanction above provisionally, immediately on receipt of a match report pending a meeting/decision of the Disciplinary Committee.

SCHEDULE EIGHT – MEDIA

ARTICLE 8.01 – PRESS REPRESENTATIVE AT MATCH VENUES

8.01(1). It shall be the responsibility of the host football Association/Club to provide a suitable Press Gallery in the stadium for the Print and Electronic Media representatives in order to enable them cover a match. On no account should they be allowed to stay in the inner perimeter.

8.01(2). Only media photographers shall be allowed into the inner perimeter fence. They shall however be restricted to the photographers mark behind the goal line of the field of play.

8.01(3). At least 30 minutes before the kick-off, each Team Manager shall submit 4 copies of his team list to the Reserve Referee who in turn shall make same available to the media. Any defaulting Team manager shall be liable to a fine of N20, 000.00 payable within a week to the NLO.

ARTICLE 8.02 – VIDEO COVERAGE OF LEAGUE MATCHES

8.02(1). Visiting teams must be allowed to record their matches and copies of the tapes handed over to the match commissioner after matches for submission To the NLO office in case of protest and for the purpose of using it on the NLO Website for the benefit of the teams.

8.02(2). Confirmed destruction of videotapes by Officials, Players, supporters or fans of teams shall attract a fine of N200, 000.00 payable within one week on receipt of the decision of Disciplinary Committee.

8.02(3). Video recording shall not be used as a measure of restricting the authority and disciplinary powers of a Referee, but only as the most accurate way of investigating the truth when disciplinary action is required.

8.02(4). Any home team whose official(s) or supporter (s) violates Article 8.02(1) shall be sanctioned by the NLO.

SCHEDULE NINE – GENERAL MATTERS

ARTICLE 9.01 – TEAM SONG/ANTHEM, LOGO, AND FLAG.

9.01(1). All League clubs must develop distinct Team song/anthems, Logos, and flags, which may be sang and displayed during League matches.

ARTICLE 9.02 – FRAUD

9.02(1). If within two months following a match, the NLO/NFF is informed no matter the source, that a fraud infringing on sporting morality has been committed by one of the clubs, if established the following measures shall be taken.

I. The club involved shall be made to lose matches for which fraud was committed.

II. Face any other disciplinary action as may be determined by the NLO/NFF.

a) If the fraud was committed by a champion club that has been awarded the trophy, the club shall be compelled to return the trophy and in addition lose its status as champion club. The position shall be taken over by the second placed team.

b) If it is established that the State FA to which the club in question is affiliated, participated in the fraud the state FA in question shall be suspended for one year from all NFF activities and its functions conducted by an NFF caretaker Committee.

c) A fine of N500, 000.00 shall also be imposed on the club and state FA concerned.

ARTICLE 9.03 – SUPPORTERS CLUB

9.03(1). Clubs shall register their supporters club which must be properly constituted and recognized. They must be easily identified by the colour of their uniform at match venue.

9.03(2). Clubs shall be held responsible for the behavior of their supporters/fans before, during, and after any match.

SCHEDULE TEN – MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR

ARTICLE 10.01 – MATTER NOT PROVIDED

10.01(1). Any unforeseen matter or not provided for in the Rules and Regulations shall be dealt with in the NLO as it deems fit.

10.01(2). Review: The Rules and Regulations of the Nation-Wide League One is subjected to yearly review or as may be determined by the Annual General Meeting.



**NLO RULES
&
REGULATION
AMENDED
VERSION
2023**