



The Lions Clubs International 5 Nations Youth Football Tournament

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUTH

There are over 900 Lions Clubs throughout the UK. Through their youth programmes each is dedicated to providing challenges and opportunities for youngsters that they would not otherwise enjoy. Any "Under 14" boys team playing in its local league, and of course affiliated to its County FA, can represent its local Lions Club in this knock-out competition. Initial games are drawn on a regional basis so as to reduce travelling time and costs, moving farther a field as the rounds progress. The semi-finals and Final are staged at league stadiums such as the City Ground, Nottingham Forest, or the Bescot Stadium Walsall. And we are looking to have some personalities present at these games for the lads to meet, and to present trophies, etc. The Competition is sanctioned each year by the English FA and by UEFA.

All this may possibly cost your Football Club NOTHING, as everything could be covered by having a sponsoring Lions Club. Home games can be played at your ground, or if you prefer you and your Lions Club can arrange another venue locally and a sponsoring Lions Club will provide food and refreshments for both teams after the match. For away games a sponsoring Lions Club will cover the cost of transport for the team and its coaches to the match. Of course, you are still very welcome to enter this prestigious national competition without the help of a local Lions Club.

This provides a wonderful opportunity for a team to play against opponents and in towns that they may never have even heard of, let alone been to before. And also provides a clear measure of what level one league really is at relative to another. Many a team unbeaten for years in its own league goes down 11-1 to a team from another league in a different part of the country that has never been in their own top six!

Lion Tony Hickling

MD Youth Football Officer (2003 – 06)

Paul Withers (2007 –)

Points for Lions Clubs & the Lions Youth Football Competition.

HOW TO GET STARTED

- 1) Read about it on the Lions webpage under 'Youth'. Get your District Officer to tell you all about it – at a Zone or Club meeting if you like.
- 2) Set up a little Committee so your Club's PR, Membership, and Fund raising members can get their teeth into it. Use a member who is enthusiastic about Football to be responsible for it.
- 3) Look in your local newspaper for teams in the U13 league – you'll need an U14 team from now on (season starting August 2007).
- 4) Contact ALL the teams within your Lion Club's patch – they all deserve the chance. This might take you an hour or so. Tell them what it's about, maybe even go and see them play.
- 5) Try not to use school teams:
 - a) School teachers do not usually fancy long trips during evenings or weekends over and above their commitments to the school;
 - b) You will be very susceptible to school holiday and other commitments; and
 - c) You will be going into the schools anyway for Peace Poster and Tacade etc. Use football as a way of getting in touch with other areas of your local community.
- 6) Invite them all to a knock-out perhaps at the local leisure centre at the end of the season. If you do this at the start of next season, you might have to send details off very smartly so as not to miss the end of August closing date.
- 7) Ensure support from local press, radio etc for this day – you could get a lot of families turning up in support of their boys. If you ask, you should get the facilities free of charge.

8) TELL PEOPLE WHAT IT IS ABOUT! This is THE ONLY Competition available to youth teams that takes them out of their home league, and is THE ONLY YOUTH COMPETITION IN THE LAND that is sanctioned by FIFA. (Next year, Ireland will join us, and with 5 Countries involved the event has to be sanctioned at the highest level).

9) Make no mistake this is a big, big thing in the football world. The only folk who often don't 'get it' are Lions. Many teams fail to play their games on time and don't take it seriously because they have got the impression that it's just a kick in the park that they have too many other things to worry about and to fit in to be bothered about it.

10) Make sure your form IS FILLED IN FULLY AND CORRECTLY

11) Tell everyone that nothing will happen between your form going off and the end of October, while our application is processed by all the national FA's and by FIFA. Use the time to familiarise yourself with the football Club, team and possible useful new contacts.

12) Pass the draw and contact information to your football team manager as soon as you get it, or he won't be able to make his arrangements with the other teams. If you haven't got it by the end of October, contact your District Officer!

13) Ensure your manager tells his league and his County FA that he has entered our Competition. While a few areas have difficulty, some leagues and even a few County FA's have made our Competition a priority over other games. Either way, telling them will help him when he comes to play our games and might even save the day if he gets to the Final and it clashes with another match that they could try to insist that he plays.

14) Take heed of the play-by dates. We are not allowed to specify particular dates for our games, but on the other hand, we must keep up to speed, or problems occur in Feb, March and April.

15) Try to ensure you have sponsorship in place for each of your matches – home to cover the catering, away to offset the cost of the bus.

16) Make sure the local press and radio are aware of what a journey your team is going on, and that they should be following it closely, or at least to telling their readers (listeners) about each success along the way.

17) Get as many of the Lions Club to the games as you can. Try to get them enthusiastic about it.

18) Hire the best bus you can 73 seats, double decker – toilets, kitchen, tables, video – your team will be a goal in front before the game even starts when it rolls up in one of these. They don't cost much more than an ordinary 53 seater, AND you get the chance to sell 20 more seats.

19) TRAVEL ON THE BUS TO AWAY GAMES WITH YOUR TEAM, COACHES, AND THEIR PARENTS. Remember the Vulnerable Persons Act !!

The Directors of the football club will get enthusiastic too. They might be influential in lots of ways – chiefs of business, are on the board of much bigger things than the local football club. They are potential Lion members. If they give their time to this (and they might give 5 or 6 hours a week) because they think it is worth while, they might also consider giving a few hours a month to their Lions Club too, if they think that its worth while.

20) Enjoy the matches, have fun with the people and meet other Lions Clubs.

21) Keep in touch with the teams and the parents after you get beaten. If you keep winning, you must, by default, get to know them better as time goes by.

22) Make sure they all know where the Final is arranged for. Your District Officer will tell you as soon as he can.

INVITE THE TEAM to the Final for a day out – after all, this was what they were playing for, wasn't it?

Lion Paul Withers MD105 Youth Football Officer

With thanks to Lion Tony Hickling