

**How to inflate your Mitre football.**

The valve and bladder of a modern football are delicate, but if the ball is treated carefully and according to these guidelines you will get the best from your Mitre ball.



Photo 1

1. Unfold the football with both hands and shake the bladder free (photo 1&2).



Photo 2

2. A Mitre ball must always be inflated by using a recommended inflation needle. Dip/Moisten the needle in Mitre glycerine (photo 3). Insert straight into the valve, rotating it left and right, without using too much force, to ensure the needle does not damage the valve or the bladder.



Photo 3

3. Pump up the ball to the recommended pressure (this is printed on the ball near the valve). Inflate slowly to allow the ball to gain its correct shape.

Rapid inflation may cause the bladder to get trapped within the ball.



Photo 4

If the correct pressure is exceeded you should immediately reduce the pressure to that recommended, as excessive pressure can easily damage the stitches and cause the ball to lose its shape. If the ball is either under or over inflated it will not perform as specified and its life span can be significantly reduced. Therefore please check the pressure with a pressure gauge. (Photo 5)



Photo 5

Balls should normally be inflated to the lower end of the pressure range printed by the valve.

**What to do if your ball slowly loses air/ pressure.**

If your ball loses pressure it is possibly due to dirt in the valve which can stop the valve from sealing properly.



Photo 6

This can usually be cured by clearing the valve as follows; dip the inflating needle in Mitre glycerine, insert into the valve and rotate the needle by rotating the end of the needle in a small circle,

also moving the needle gently up and down (Photo 6). The dirt obstructing the valve will be cleared by the glycerine and the valve should seal. It may be necessary to repeat this procedure to completely clear the valve.

**MAINTENANCE TIPS**

\* After use clean the balls with a damp cloth (photo 7)



Photo 7

\* Clean the seams/stitches with a toothbrush (photo 8).



Photo 8

\* After use gently clean the valve with glycerine to ensure an air tight seal.

\* Store the ball at reduced pressure in a dry, airy place at normal room temperature.

\* Never clean the ball in a shower or plunge into water.

\* Never dry the ball on or near a heating device.

\* Never grease the ball with dubbin.

\* Never use mineral oils instead of glycerine to clear valve as they contain detergents harmful to rubber.

**NB: See reverse for further tips on troubleshooting and how to care for your Mitre Footballs.**

**Trapped Bladder**

Occasionally on inflating your Mitre football you may find that the ball appears not to roll true along the ground or spin true during flight. Often this is due to the bladder being trapped on one side of the ball.

If the bladder becomes trapped/stuck to the casing during inflation; in the area where the bladder is stuck the bladder will not be stretched to the extent that the free bladder will thus causing an imbalance in the ball which causes the ball to wobble.

This can be corrected by taking the following short simple steps as explained below:

- \* Deflate and compress the football.
- \* Remove needle and unfold the ball to a round shape. Shake the ball; you should feel the bladder move within the ball if it is free (as step 1 on reverse of this document).
- \* If the bladder has been released it is possible to hear it moving within the casing. However if it is still trapped the following action should free the bladder,
  - Firmly bounce the ball whilst deflated; doing so until you can hear the bladder is loose when you shake the ball.
- \* Your Mitre football should now be ready to inflate and perform properly.



Photo 9

**How to care for your Mitre Footballs.**

As more clubs are using PU and Micro fibre balls for regular daily training it is important to remember that the life of a PU ball can be substantially reduced if the ball is not dried regularly and is allowed to remain wet over an extended period.

Whilst Mitre balls are water resistant they will take on small amounts of water during a match or training session, and, if not dried out between sessions, this can accumulate to over 10% increase in weight over a number of days.

Water attacks the PU from inside the ball and can result in the PU breaking down due to hydrolysis, eventually cracking and breaking up the surface. It is therefore important to dry the ball regularly and never store it in a wet condition.

This is best done by storing the balls loose or in a mesh bag (see photo 9) in a dry airy place - preferably with a little warmth to aid drying. However, warm damp conditions are just as harmful as cold damp conditions - the most important factor is the humidity of the air. The air should be dry.

Air is dried by increasing the temperature without adding water - shower and changing rooms tend to be very damp even if they are warm.

Drying rooms should be warm and well ventilated. Balls will not dry if kept in a closed space. The balls are best removed from a nylon bag for drying but can be dried in a mesh bag. Also the boot of a car can be very damp and balls will not dry correctly there.

Often kit rooms are closed rooms with little ventilation - balls can still be dried effectively in such a room by fitting it with a low cost portable dehumidifier which can be left running overnight and will dry all the balls in the room completely.

Keeping the balls dry can more than double the useful life of a PU ball so it is very cost effective.

Some teams clean the ball in the showers after use - this pumps a large amount of water into the ball and is not recommended - if the ball is dirty just wipe clean with a damp cloth and clean seams with a toothbrush - do not immerse in water in any circumstances.

**How do you know when the ball is dry?**

If you have a set of scales the ball will return to its normal weight of 420 - 440 grams when dry. During a single training session in wet conditions the ball may gain 5 - 10 grams of water; if not allowed to dry this can accumulate to 50 grams within a week. This weight gain will already be damaging the strength of the ball.

Under normal drying conditions a ball will dry by 10 - 15 grams per day, so if the ball has not been dried for several days it may take 3 or 4 days to fully dry out.

Deflating the ball can speed up the process but should not be necessary provided the balls are dried overnight whenever they get very wet. If the balls have been allowed to accumulate a significant amount of water (50 grams+) then we do recommend you deflate them to dry them out completely before next using them.

We also recommend you inflate your Mitre football at least 24 hours before using in order to allow it to settle.

**\*\*\* GOOD MAINTENANCE INCREASES THE LIFESPAN OF YOUR MITRE FOOTBALL \*\*\***

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